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The Management of Ineffective Performance

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The Management of INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

John B. Miner
PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

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THE MANAGEMENT OF INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

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To Barbara, John, Cynthia, and Frances

PREFACE

A book is rarely written merely because the author decides he would like to publish something on a certain topic and then sits down to write. Most books have a long prepublication history during which the ideas evolve slowly to the point where a framework for a book finally emerges. This volume is no exception. The starting point was sometime in 1956. During that year and the one which followed, James Anderson, a specialist in public administration and manpower utilization, Eli Ginzberg, an economist, John Herma, a psychoanalyst and psychologist, and the writer, an industrial psychologist and personnel man, were all working on the Conservation of Human Resources Project at Columbia University preparing the three volumes which were subsequently published under the title *The Ineffective Soldier* (6, 37, 38). The four of us held many discussions concerning the concept of performance and the factors which influence work efficiency. It was out of these discussions that the idea for a publication dealing specifically with methods of handling ineffective performance in the business world first emerged.

Subsequently this idea was developed more fully and incorporated in a management development course which the writer has offered on a number of occasions, both as a regular company program and as a university-sponsored seminar for industrial managers. Later the course was expanded and instituted as a regular school of business administration offering in business organization and management. It has been taught as an undergraduate lecture course and, when combined with extensive outside readings, as a graduate seminar. In connection with a number of these courses, both in industry and in the university setting, research has been carried out to determine whether the course really did contribute to managerial effectiveness (79, 132, 133). It was the success of these studies which encouraged the writer to organize the material in book form.

As this brief history indicates, the primary purpose in writing this volume has been to provide practicing business managers and managers in training with a synthesis of available information on work performance and with a method of dealing with individuals who are not meeting established standards of effectiveness. The writer cannot help hoping, however, that some of the ideas here will also prove useful to those with primarily scholarly interests in the fields of organization theory and manpower utilization, whether their original training was in business administration, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, industrial engineering, psychiatry, anthropology, or some related field.

Whatever his background, the reader should be cautioned in one respect. The ideas presented on the following pages have been developed in sequence. The later chapters, and the performance analyses of Chapter 12 in particular, rely heavily on definitions and concepts covered earlier. Chapter 12 can, for instance, be consulted as a source of detailed information regarding the factors which have apparently contributed to a given individual's failure on the job. But it is most likely to be helpful if the reader has previously acquired at least a general familiarity with the material contained in the first eleven chapters.

JOHN B. MINER

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1

AN INTRODUCTION TO PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

As the title suggests, references to success and outstanding accomplishment occur rarely in these pages. The emphasis is on failure and people who have failed and why they have failed. The objective is to provide an understanding of the factors that may contribute to ineffective performance and of the techniques that a manager may employ in his efforts to cope with it. The only success this book is concerned with is the success a manager achieves because he is able to produce an effective level of performance in an individual who has previously been considered a failure.

One assumption is basic to all that follows: Corrective action, if it is to accomplish its goal more frequently than pure luck would allow, must be predicated on a thorough understanding of the factors causing the difficulty. The manager must become in one sense a diagnostician. He must devote time and effort to determining what it is that has produced the poor performance. Only then is he in a position to prescribe an appropriate solution. Intelligent corrective action must be based on a comprehensive knowledge of the factors which have created and perpetuated the failure. This is the *raison d'être* of performance analysis.

In a sense the managerial job requires skills which are analogous to those of an experienced automobile mechanic. Faced with a car which does not run satisfactorily, the competent mechanic asks questions of the driver, observes the condition of the engine, and introduces various changes while noting their effects on operating efficiency. Only then is he in a position to take some kind of corrective action. He does not begin by replacing the carburetor, although this approach may occasionally prove successful. It may also prove highly profitable, at least for a brief period of time. But we would never consider a man who employs it a good mechanic.

The point is perhaps even more appropriately made with reference to the physician. No competent practitioner would consider prescribing a remedy without some attempt to determine causation. The days of bloodletting as an almost invariable treatment, applied without knowledge of or attempt to determine the factors producing the disorder, are gone. Medical practice has developed to the point where a more sophisticated approach is possible, and the human life-span has consequently been extended by many years. The field of management has only recently begun to enter a similar stage. Just as biological research provided the knowledge necessary for advances in medical practice, social science research is now beginning to provide means for the improvement of managerial practice. We have reached the point where "managerial bloodletting" is no longer satisfactory or even acceptable. The knowledge and tools which will permit some extension of the "occupational life-span" are already available, although perhaps not yet widely understood. The knowledge may be relatively rudimentary and the tools rather gross, but they are sufficient to allow a much more sophisticated approach to the supervision of subordinates than has been possible previously. They are also sufficient to permit the use of a diagnostic approach and the application of "cures" which have some relationship to known causes.

Although it is by no means the only aspect of the managerial job, the handling of ineffective performance is a major responsibility of management. The manager is a person who has been assigned more work than he can do alone. He must therefore induce others to assist him if he is to be successful. To the extent that these others fail to perform effectively, he himself will fall short of complete success. In practice this means that the man who is failing creates a very special problem and consequently places unique demands on his superior's time. The individual who does his job well does not make major demands on supervision. He is capable of working for long periods on his own. The ineffective, on the other hand, characteristically requires frequent attention, and many hours are often devoted to consideration of his difficulties. It is because the handling of ineffective performance is such an important aspect of the managerial job, and because knowledge in this area has now reached significant proportions, that it is desirable—and possible—for a book such as this to be written. In the long run the possession of an advanced skill in the management of ineffective performance should make the manager's job much easier. It will certainly make the manager himself more effective.

Performance Failure in a Competitive Economic System

What is meant by poor or ineffective performance? The problem is a complex one, but an understanding of it is crucial to all that follows. Individual performance is characteristically judged or measured in terms of its contribution to the goals of the particular organization. These goals tend to be intimately associated with the values of the members—with what the members believe the goals should be. Although in any organization there is likely to be a diversity of opinion in this regard, some degree of consensus usually prevails. In business this organizational goal is generally considered to be the continuing maximization of net profit within the limits set by the ethical and legal standards of society. There are many who would contend that this is not or should not be the objective of business enterprise. Many alternative or supplementary goals have been proposed. But the vast majority of business managers are still extremely responsive to an appeal based on the ultimate criterion of profitability. And society as a whole, to the extent that it supports capitalism in any form, automatically commits itself to this position. If our economic system is in any sense a capitalistic one, and even the most casual observation and discussion would indicate that it is, then that fact implies that our business organizations must have profit as their ultimate goal. By embracing capitalism we bind ourselves to the view that each individual business *should* compete for profits. It follows that the performance of the individual members of a business organization must be evaluated in terms of their contribution to the profitability of the firm.

Other types of organizations will, of course, have completely different objectives, and performance within these will be judged on some other basis. Furthermore, any individual member of a company's employee group may also be a member of some other organization with objectives differing from, or even completely at variance with, those of the business. This in no way negates the fact that within the firm itself the behavior of individual members must be evaluated in relation to the company goals. The same behavior may, of course, be evaluated in an entirely different manner by some other group, such as a union, of which the man is a member. A "good union man" *may*, by virtue of his commitment to a competing organization, behave in a manner which causes him to be labeled ineffective by his company.

When we speak of ineffective performance, however, more is implied than merely a relationship to profits. The use of the qualifier *ineffective* indicates some feeling that an individual's behavior is unsatisfactory, that he has fallen below some standard. Since the standard which constitutes the dividing line between effective and ineffective performance is not always clearly or exactly defined by the manager or by the organization, it is impossible to provide a perfectly precise definition of ineffectiveness. As a working guide it can be said that a man has failed if his performance is *considered* unsatisfactory either by his superiors or in terms of organizational standards. Although this definition lacks theoretical sophistication, it does possess considerable pragmatic value.

The standards used are established by a man's line superiors and by certain groups within the organization which have been assigned this function. These characteristically include units with titles such as personnel, budget, methods and standards, industrial engineering, quality control, etc. The standards may be rigidly established numerical cutting points, or they may be highly subjective feelings existing only in the minds of individuals and subject to frequent variation. Although objectively and subjectively established standards such as these may not be equally desirable from the point of view of their contribution to organizational goals, they do have the same consequences for supervisor and subordinate. Once a manager defines a man as ineffective in some respect, it matters little to him or to the man how the standard was established. Both have a problem which needs solving. And it is the problem which is important.

This does not, of course, eliminate the possibility that either the manager or the organization might establish inappropriate standards which are clearly inconsistent with the company goals. It is in fact possible that inappropriate standards might constitute a complete explanation of ineffectiveness—that a man might be ineffective by definition only. Even in such cases, however, there is still a problem to be solved. The man has been defined as ineffective, and some action must be taken. The matter cannot be ignored because the standards were loosely and subjectively defined or because they were inappropriately high.

Standards are not, of course, characteristically established for a single dimension called performance. Usually performance is broken into a variety of dimensions or aspects, and standards of ineffectiveness are developed for each. A man may be said to be producing an unsatisfactory quantity of work, to be absent too often, or to be ineffective in some other respect. Companies have developed a great variety of criteria by which to evaluate people. In many firms the same factor is used under different names. It seems possible, however, to reduce this diversity to four basic dimensions or aspects of performance. These four appear to be sufficient to cover all major criteria which are in fact used to evaluate work-related behavior and which can be logically derived from the goals of the business organization. There are of course many aspects of human beings and their behavior which are evaluated by other people but which have nothing to do with organizational goals and the profitability of the enterprise. These are not comprehended by the four categories. Also, it is clear that subdivisions can, and on occasion should, be made within each of the four.

Quality is an obvious first. Work is almost universally evaluated in terms of the number of errors or mistakes—in terms of accuracy. Quantity of output has achieved a similar acceptance. A man is characteristically considered ineffective if he fails to complete a satisfactory amount of work within a designated time span. A third dimension may be considered primarily a derivative of these two, especially of quantity, but is so widely utilized as an independent criterion that it seems desirable to do so here. This is time spent on the job. It includes absenteeism, lateness, lost time, premature separation, etc. The individual who spends insufficient time in job performance is generally judged ineffective on that basis alone. His impact on company goals derives from the fact that if he is not present and working, he cannot produce an adequate quantity of work; or if he attempts to do so within an insufficient time span (perhaps he has missed three out of the five working days in the week), the quality of his work will inevitably suffer. There is no question that the person who spends so little time on the job that he cannot do his work in a satisfactory manner is, and should be, considered ineffective. This is true irrespective of the cause. A man who has a serious illness which prevents him from working for a long period of time is an unsatisfactory employee insofar as his contribution to company goals is concerned, even though by almost any other criterion he would be judged an object for sympathy rather than disapproval.

The final aspect of performance is more complex than the preceding three. It refers to the degree of cooperation with others in attaining organizational goals. In a sense this contains two related dimensions. It means in part the impact of the individual on the performance of coworkers. The man who in some manner reduces the quantity or quality of the work done by other members of the group, or who reduces the time they spend at work, may be considered ineffective with reference to this criterion. This aspect of performance also includes the direct impact of the individual on the attainment of organizational goals. Men who steal from the company, who incur court judgments against the company for damages, or who frequently break equipment and waste materials in the course of production all have a direct negative impact on profits.

This fourth dimension is, of course, particularly relevant in evaluating managers, since the very nature of the managerial job requires taking action which is directed at influencing the performance of others and making decisions which have a direct bearing on profits. If a manager himself acts in such a way as to have a consistently detrimental effect on the work performance of his subordinates, then he is likely to be labeled ineffective. Similarly, the manager who frequently makes decisions which prove to be costly blunders, or who seriously threatens the survival of the organization in some way, may well receive the same designation. Performance analysis as presented here is a procedure which a manager may use to minimize the probability of his being considered below standard by this fourth criterion. These pages attempt to provide him with knowledge and tools to employ in determining the causes of performance failure and the appropriate corrective action. As such, the book is a means to a positive, rather than a negative, impact on the performance of others.

It is now possible to answer the question which prefaced this discussion: What is meant by poor or ineffective performance? Ineffective performance is the failure to achieve minimal standards as established by line superiors and appropriate organizational groups. These standards represent cutting points on certain dimensions or aspects of performance which have been established in view of their relationships to organizational objectives. Four such dimensions have been noted: quality of work, quantity, presence on the job, and cooperation with others in attaining organizational goals. A man may fail in one of these dimensions or in all of them; for the purpose of defining ineffectiveness it matters little. Nevertheless, in terms of the problem confronting the responsible manager, the number of ways in which a subordinate fails is an important consideration. A man who does outstanding work, never misses a day, has a positive impact on others, but is excessively slow, represents a very different type of problem from the individual who is below standard in all four areas. Yet both are ineffective.

Screening and Firing as Solutions

The question remains: Why is it necessary for a manager to analyze each instance of performance failure with a view to determining causation? Why, in fact, must he face the problem of ineffective performance at all? Is it not possible to screen out at the time of employment all those who would subsequently fail? And cannot all candidates for promotion be similarly screened, so that any who would be ineffective in the higher-level position can be eliminated from further consideration? In short, cannot selection procedures lift the weight of ineffective performance from the backs of managers thus eliminating the need for performance analysis and for books such as this?

Unfortunately science has not yet produced techniques which are capable of eliminating ineffectives from a company's work force in this manner. Screening in industry today can and does result in a sizable reduction in the amount of poor performance (12, 152). Without these techniques the number of problem cases confronting any manager would unquestionably be much greater. And in all probability, more extensive and effective utilization of the techniques currently available could even further reduce the extent of performance failure. Yet in a practical sense, though perhaps not in a theoretical one, there are limits to what can be accomplished. Certainly screening and selection (the words refer to opposite sides of the same process) face some obstacles which to date have proved insurmountable.

A major difficulty is that the available measuring devices are far from perfect. They do not always reveal a characteristic when it is present or the exact extent to which it is present. This is true in varying degrees of all the selection techniques currently in use: interviews, application blanks, psychological tests, reference checks, credit bureau investigations, physical examinations. All of these, whether they attempt to obtain a sample of typical behavior, a sample of physical functioning, or information on previous behavior, are subject to some error. People do not always tell all they might during interviews, for example, and even physical measures such as those commonly employed in testing vision and audition are, on occasion, unreliable. In spite of recent advances, there is still a major need for further research in psychological and biological measurement and prediction.

In connection with personnel selection, psychological tests are being increasingly employed. Some comment on the trend should be made at this point. There has been some contention that these tests are devices for identifying characteristics which an employer may wish to use as a basis for screening, but which have no real relationship to job performance. Yet the evidence is overwhelmingly against this conclusion. Thousands of studies have been conducted which indicate that a great variety of tests can and do predict, with accuracy well beyond that which could be attributed to mere luck, who will and will not be likely to perform effectively (4). It is easy to sympathize with those who must take the tests and even to understand their occasional resistance to the whole idea of testing, but from a managerial viewpoint it is difficult to justify a failure to employ tools which have again and again been proved capable of reducing the incidence of ineffective performance.

The questioning of personality tests has been especially frequent, in particular the questioning of the so-called projective measures such as the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), the Tomkins-Horn Picture Arrangement Test (PAT), the Rorschach, the various adjective checklists, and the sentence-completion scales. Some writers have contended that these projective tests represent an unwarranted invasion of privacy, since the person tested does not know what he is saying about himself and may even reveal characteristics which he has never recognized in himself at all. Such writers believe that it is unethical for an employer to obtain such information and use it in selecting employees or in placing them in positions where they are most likely to be effective. Yet there is considerable evidence that tests of this kind are related to job performance. They can identify those who are doing well or poorly in certain jobs with a surprisingly high degree of precision, and they can be used to predict those who will be likely to fail (46, 77, 82, 185). If we are to proscribe their use for purposes of job placement because the person being tested is unaware of what he is revealing, we should also proscribe on the same basis most of the tests a physician uses in connection with the preemployment physical examination.

Even when good selection techniques are available, however, they are not always employed with maximum effectiveness. Perhaps they never can be. There is always an element of human error, always the possibility that the person applying the screening procedure will overlook something or make a mistake. If, for instance, psychological tests administered as part of an applicant testing battery are rescored later at a more leisurely pace, errors characteristically emerge. Most are of little practical significance—one or two points one way or the other. Occasionally, however, a sizable disparity is found. For example, a whole column of the answer sheet may have been skipped or counted twice. The same kinds of difficulties are found with other techniques. Interviewers frequently forget important information. Physicians fail to note important cues to diagnosis. X-ray pictures require considerable skill of the user, and a tired nurse or medical technician can easily overlook a crucial sign.

In addition, considerations of economy tend to limit the use of some of the available selection techniques. For example, relatively effective tests for epilepsy and other disorders of the brain have been discovered and could be included in the usual preemployment physical examination. But the equipment is very costly, the time required considerable, and the incidence of these disorders within the labor force rather low. It is not economical to screen candidates for employment on this basis. Accordingly, such cases as do occur go undetected. The same is true, in many instances, of psychological tests. A good selection battery for a given job is developed only after an extensive process involving comparison of test scores with various indexes of performance effectiveness. This is worthwhile only if the company hires a number of people in the position or positions for which the test battery was developed. Since most companies have many jobs requiring only an occasional new employee, there are characteristically large numbers of people hired without as extensive screening as might be desired if cost were not a consideration.

The failure of screening to provide a total solution to the problem of ineffectiveness is not, however, entirely attributable to difficulties associated with the selection instruments themselves. There are also such factors as ambiguous definitions of performance and unstable standards. For example, two supervisors may utilize different criteria in evaluating the performance of subordinates. Factors such as these make it possible for two employees whose behavior on the job is practically identical to be evaluated quite differently. One may be considered ineffective, the other not. No amount of research on selection techniques alone can yield a way of predicting the evaluated performance of these men correctly. Either some approach which will make allowances for differences in methods of judging performance must be developed, or objective and precise criteria of performance must be consistently applied. At present no completely adequate solutions of either kind are available, although some relatively good working approximations are in use.

This problem is further compounded by the fact that the same man may work under a succession of supervisors all utilizing somewhat different criteria of performance and standards of effectiveness. Where objective measures of performance have been developed, usually by some organizational group such as methods and standards or personnel research, these variations in evaluations are minimized. But there are many jobs, especially at the management level, where subjective judgments by a superior are all that are available. The application of screening procedures is clearly limited by the degree of precision and consistency attained in the area of performance evaluation. It is not possible to attain high levels of success in screening out ineffectives when one cannot be absolutely certain regarding what will constitute failure at a given time.

Change is, of course, not restricted to the matter of standards. Any shift in the work environment, the composition of the work group, the individual himself, or the job requirements may make for errors of prediction and thus less than perfect screening. Emotional and physical disorders may develop in a man who was quite well at the time of hiring. Interests and motivation may change. Or the job itself may have to adjust to a changing technology. A man originally selected for work as a ledger man may well prove ineffective as a machine operator when automated accounting procedures are introduced. The function performed remains the same, but the skills and duties required have shifted drastically. So far, initial screening procedures which will predict and adjust for such changes have not been forthcoming. Perhaps they never will be.

There are also times when potential ineffectives are permitted to enter organizations even though they have been identified with great precision at hiring. This is likely to be the case when the labor market becomes extremely tight. If shortages in some occupation are so acute that a sufficient number of people cannot be found, a firm may have to accept applicants for whom the probability of failure is known to be high. A few such people may prove to be better than expected. Others will perform in a satisfactory manner for a brief period of time. It is better to have someone doing something than a position unfilled because no qualified applicants can be found. There is evidence from a variety of sources that eventually standards tend to be lowered under these circumstances. The Army during World War II clearly modified its discharge policy, and thus one definition of failure, to meet conditions existing in its manpower pool (37).

The hiring of potential ineffectives is not limited to periods of shortage, however. Since a man may fail in one aspect of his work while at the same time performing successfully in other areas, a company may reach a favorable decision on employment in spite of known weaknesses. On occasion it is expedient to accept deficiencies in order to gain the advantages of certain strengths. This is particularly likely to be true in the case of a staff specialist or a policy maker. The company will then characteristically make every effort to minimize the consequences in the man's areas of ineffectiveness. This does not relieve the man's superior of the need for dealing with the problem of failure, however. It only restricts the manager's freedom of action in this respect, since the man is hired with a proviso that he will be retained and in a job that makes maximum use of his talents.

For a variety of reasons it appears that the manager does have to deal with ineffectiveness and must continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Screening may reduce the burden but cannot eliminate it entirely. There is, however, another alternative which would obviate the need for performance analysis although not the problem of ineffectiveness. If all who become ineffective could be fired as soon as their failings became evident, there would be no need to determine the causes of the difficulty. Diagnosis would be unnecessary, because the same solution could be applied irrespective of causation. This is an appealing answer. Where there has been an opportunity to employ it, managers have frequently done so. Historically, firing has been the preferred solution in most instances of performance failure. But the world is constantly changing, and for a variety of reasons the business segment has frequently been at the forefront of the change. This has been particularly true in matters related to the management of people and manpower utilization. Whereas organizations in many other segments of society still remain free to apply their ultimate sanction, dismissal, almost at will, this alternative is available to business firms only on a restricted basis. In fact, its availability has been decreasing so steadily that at the present time it cannot be considered in any sense a preferred solution to problems of performance failure. There are other courses of action which are much more appropriately employed.

At present the climate of public opinion and the external governmental controls within which the business firm operates make disciplinary action for dishonest or antisocial behavior and retirement the only completely acceptable bases for the forcible separation of an employee. In addition, layoffs are generally accepted by the public as a matter of economic necessity, although they are, of course, charged against a company in computing its rate of contribution to unemployment compensation (as are retirements, in some instances). Layoffs and retirements, however, characteristically have little impact on the proportion of the work force which is ineffective, and disciplinary firing is actually applied in a very small number of cases. Layoffs are usually carried out on a seniority rather than merit basis, with the result that those with poor performance records are no more likely to go than anyone else. Retirements, insofar as they are based on strict adherence to a predetermined retirement age, cannot take differences in effectiveness into account. Disability retirement, of course, is performance-related, and so are a few of the early retirement plans developed in the past few years.

Why is it that firing for poor performance has become so difficult? As previously noted, the pressure of public opinion is a major factor. With increased realization that the man himself may not be entirely responsible for his failure, and that mere increased effort on his part may not solve the problem, there has come a feeling that dismissal may often be unfair and inequitable. This view has without question been influential in producing or supporting many of the more specific conditions which tend to limit a manager's freedom in this respect.

One factor restricting dismissal in cases of ineffective performance is the necessity of paying for work not performed. Companies contribute to state unemployment compensation funds in accordance with an experience rating procedure which, except in instances where the fund is seriously depleted, results in greater payments being made by firms with a greater number of ex-employees filing claims. In addition, many companies have agreements, of either a formal or informal nature, requiring severance payments to any employee who must be separated after a minimum period of service. The consequence of these two factors is that the mere act of dismissing a man results in certain costs. Although these costs may not be great, they are sufficient to require consideration when firing is contemplated.

There are other costs which may develop, depending on the circumstances. If there is any possibility that a man's firing represents an unfair labor practice, i.e., that he has been dismissed because of union activity, the company may have to reinstate him with back pay. Even if the company wins such a case, either before the Labor Relations Board or in the courts, the process is likely to be time-consuming and expensive. Furthermore, any discharge may result in a grievance being filed by the union and perhaps in arbitration. Or a strike may be precipitated. This is particularly likely to occur where a no-strike clause has not been written into the labor contract. But even with such a clause, there is the possibility of a wildcat strike or a slowdown. Under any of these eventualities the costs to the company, either directly or in terms of lost production, may be sizable, and the original decision by management may have to be reversed. The man may not stay fired.

Even without union intervention there is a possibility that those who have worked with the man may feel that his firing was inequitable and, accordingly, respond with actions detrimental to company objectives. The group may set out to make things difficult for the supervisor in charge —to get even with the company. In all probability this threat has been somewhat exaggerated by management, but it still represents a distinct possibility and therefore does, in fact, serve to deter many who might otherwise resort to dismissal. In many respects this expectation of employee reprisal is similar to the expectation of consumer reprisal. It is possible that a man's sense of injustice may be of such intensity as to make him attempt to convince others that they should not buy the company's products or apply for work there. Thus, both the product market and the available labor market may be reduced. Again, management may sometimes overemphasize the significance of this public retaliation, but it is nevertheless a possibility. The prevalence of such views, and the presumption that at least some negative public reaction, no matter how minute, will result, tend to minimize the probability that a decision to discharge will be made.

There are other, less elusive, factors. Training a new employee is always a costly process. When a man is fired, the company not only loses the possibility of gaining any further return on its investment in him, but it usually incurs the cost of training his replacement. For this reason it is inefficient to dismiss anyone whose skills can be used and who can perform effectively somewhere in the organization. Transfer, if feasible, may make for a considerable saving. Therefore, most companies no longer permit a man's immediate superior to make decisions regarding firing on a completely unilateral basis. With rising replacement costs resulting from the extensive training which a rapidly changing technology requires, and with the added possibility that the man might be used elsewhere in the organization, firing has come to have implications extending well beyond the man's immediate group. Furthermore, it may be that conditions in the labor force and within the company make finding a suitable replacement difficult. The individual manager may not be aware of these conditions. Such circumstances have tended to make firing an organizational rather than a purely personal decision and have consequently served to reduce the incidence of dismissal.

We have already noted that a man may be ineffective in certain respects but entirely satisfactory insofar as other performance dimensions are concerned. In many such cases firing is completely out of the question as a solution to the performance failure, since the man's special competencies are too badly needed.

Finally, there are certain pressures within organizations which, whether they should or not, do in fact tend to weigh against dismissal as a solution to problems of ineffectiveness. In many firms there is an unwritten policy that any man who has been retained for a considerable period of time, perhaps ten years or so, should not be fired. If he has been unsatisfactory from the beginning, he should have been released long before, and therefore the company by keeping him has made itself largely responsible for the current problem. If his ineffectiveness is of comparatively recent origin, he should be retained out of appreciation for his contributions in the past—for having given the best years of his life to the company.

Furthermore, there is often a feeling within the ranks of a management group that no one member should be responsible for the firing of another. There is always the possibility that political (and personal) rather than performance considerations might be given undue weight. Managers are, of course, forced out, but frequently this is done only after much soul-searching. The possibility that negative social consequences and perhaps even almost complete ostracism may result cannot be taken lightly. Loyalty to the managerial group is a very important thing in any company, and the discharge of a fellow member, especially if he is at all popular, may bring down heavy sanctions on the heads of those responsible.

These pressures are not, however, always purely external. They derive from values and beliefs which are widely held. They may well operate within a manager himself to keep him from doing anything that might contribute to a man's being dismissed. It is not easy to fire a man. The experience of guilt can be very unpleasant. It may well be that this is the strongest deterrent of all.

Pressures such as these, which may develop without any relation to the goals of the organization, tend to combine with the factors of a more pragmatic nature to make most managers today view discharge as a very unsatisfactory solution to ineffectiveness. Added to this is the fact that firing, like screening, cannot save a manager from dealing analytically with the problem of ineffective performance. He must know whether there is any possibility, within the limitations set by economic considerations, of improving the man's effectiveness. Only when all other alternatives have been ruled out can firing be considered the appropriate solution. But alternatives cannot be eliminated without some knowledge of what has in fact caused the difficulty, i.e., without some type of performance analysis.

Strategic Factors in Ineffective Performance

Job performance is a complex product, a derivative of the interaction among many factors in the individual and the world around him. Performance analysis involves the identification of these factors, or causes, as they contribute to ineffective performance. What are the strategic factors which have combined to make an individual perform at a level below that established by existing standards? This is the diagnostic question on which all corrective action is predicated. The chapters which follow provide a framework for answering such a question. They contain information about the aspects of the individual and his environment which may prove strategic and about the various ways in which these aspects may operate to produce failure. They also contain information regarding the extent to which, and the conditions under which, strategic factors may be altered to yield a satisfactory level of performance.

Performance analysis requires a manager to pose a series of questions. Is it possible that this—or this—or this aspect of the individual or his situation may be a cause of failure? These questions are checked against the information available on the individual and his work. Some are rejected as untenable; it is unlikely that the failure has been caused in this way. Others seem to fit the data; they do in fact refer to what appear to be crucial determinants. The strategic factors in any case of ineffective performance are thus revealed by the specific questions which receive an affirmative answer.

The number of factors which may be strategic appears to be large—so large, in fact, that any manager is likely to have difficulty remembering all the questions that should be asked. It is possible, however, to categorize the various potential strategic factors under a limited number of headings and thus reduce considerably the cumbersomeness of the analytic process. The titles of Chapters 2 through 10 represent just such a schema: All possible strategic factors that have been identified to date fall into one of the nine areas.

Although extended treatment at this point is unnecessary, a brief statement regarding the components of this analytic framework should show what is meant by a strategic factor. The first four categories refer to aspects of the individual. There may be some intellectual deficiency relative to job requirements: The man may be lacking in knowledge, intelligence, or mental ability. Or there may be some emotional problem, perhaps an emotional disorder or illness affecting performance, or perhaps simply a lack of consonance between job demands and characteristic ways of expressing feelings. Again, there may be a conflict of a motivational nature: Strong motives may be blocked at work, or they may be satisfied through activities which are at variance with the demands of effective performance. Finally, there may be a physical disorder, deficiency, or characteristic which is detrimental on the job or perhaps incapacitating.

The next four categories refer to the various groups of which the man is a member. The man's family or some similar face-to-face group may precipitate problems which conflict with job performance. The same may be true of the work group, which includes the man's immediate supervisor as one of its members. Or the cause of the difficulty may lie with the company, which, of course, performs a variety of acts and establishes a variety of conditions with a direct impact on individual members. Finally, performance failure may result when some characteristic of the individual or the job does not fulfill, or is not in harmony with, the demands of society as a whole. These societal demands may be in the form of cultural values or formal laws.

The ninth category has been called situational. It takes into account those nonhuman aspects of a man's environment which may be strategic to performance failure. It also includes the actions of various groups of which the man may not be specifically a member, but which nevertheless impinge on him and influence his behavior.

This analytic schema, although it has been developed from the study of ineffective performance, would probably be adequate to encompass superior or outstanding performance as well. That is, factors of an intellectual, emotional, motivational, physical, group, organizational, cultural, and situational nature presumably also act to make a man exceptionally effective in his work. But the specific strategic factors within categories do not appear to be the same for high levels of effectiveness as for ineffectiveness. This is an important caution. The fact that the lack of a given characteristic contributes to failure in a certain type of work does not necessarily mean that an abundance of the characteristic will produce great success. Taking appropriate corrective action with regard to a strategic factor does not mean that superior performance will result; only that an effective or satisfactory level is likely to be established.

The point can be made more clearly with reference to a specific study. Research conducted to determine what characteristics made for success and failure among dealer salesmen working for a petroleum company (46) indicated that a dislike of social situations and of social interaction was associated with poor job performance. Conversely, a wish to be with other people as much as possible was characteristic among the successful performers. This is what would be expected if feeling with regard to social situations were strategic in both ineffective and outstanding performance. But while a lack of aggressiveness was frequent among the poor salesmen, a great deal of aggressiveness did not contribute to success. By another criterion, the superior salesmen in the study were often self-confident and sure of themselves. They were also likely to be very happy people. But there was nothing to indicate that either a lack of self-confidence or unhappiness and depression were particularly prevalent among those who were failing. It is clear that we cannot move directly from knowledge in the area of ineffectiveness to statements about factors contributing to superior performance.

This type of discontinuous relationship may be illustrated by some recent research dealing with the determinants of high and low morale (70). Dissatisfaction with a job was most frequently a result of either company policy and administration or poor supervision. These factors rarely contributed to high levels of satisfaction, however. The implication is that irrespective of what is done to construct good policies, administer them well, and provide good technical supervision, there cannot be any sizable shift to high levels of job satisfaction within the organization. The best that can be hoped for is a diminution in any dissatisfaction that may exist. Positive satisfaction, on the other hand, seemed to result primarily from such factors as achievements, recognition, interesting work, opportunity to exercise responsibility, and promotion. A lack of these five factors, however, was not equally likely to produce dissatisfaction.

A similar approach to the study of performance (rather than job satisfaction) has not as yet been attempted on a comparable scale. Also, there is a dearth of information on the determinants of outstanding accomplishment. Nevertheless, it is clear from the research which has been done that the strategic factors in ineffective performance are not always identical with those operating at the superior level.

The Scientist and the Practitioner

The chapters which follow deal with the various strategic factors in ineffective performance and with the solutions which can be applied. The material derives from two rather different sources and utilizes two different kinds of evidence. The approach is thus to some degree a synthesis of viewpoints, and it is important to differentiate between them.

In the sciences it is characteristic to adopt an attitude of cautious skepticism, to maintain a position of neutrality until all the evidence is in. This is the essence of scientific objectivity. Theory, hypothesis, and assumption must be clearly differentiated from empirical fact, and where the evidence is inadequate or insufficient, the only tenable position is one of uncertainty. "I don't know" is not only an acceptable response to questioning but a highly valued one. For only through the admission that adequate knowledge is lacking can significant questions and research that will advance knowledge be evolved.

In the social sciences, where real progress has been made only in relatively recent years, this attitude has often been taken to mean that until much more extensive evidence has been obtained and a body of tested theory produced, practical applications should not be attempted. Some writers have argued against premature application on the grounds that extension to practical ends is not feasible while scientific knowledge remains so incomplete (175). Others have contested this view, contending that if such conclusions as are derived from scientific studies are not interpreted and put to practical use by the researchers themselves, they may well be perverted by others with a need for knowledge but less familiarity with the laws of scientific evidence (171). Nevertheless, strictures against overinterpretation of data and premature generalization remain strong and serve, in many segments of the scientific community, effectively to limit attempts to answer practical questions. "I don't know" is still a widely voiced answer to questions of an applied nature. From the scientific standpoint it is often the most appropriate response in view of the present state of knowledge.

Necessary as this attitude of skepticism and objectivity may be to scientific advance, however, it is inconsistent with the demands placed upon the practitioner. Management has always had to make decisions with insufficient information available. Unlike the scientist, the manager can rarely resort to "I don't know." He must accumulate as much valid information as he can and then act. He attempts to minimize the risk of error, but he cannot defer judgment until all relevant data are in. As a result of his specific objectives and the particular demands of his job, the manager may, therefore, generalize from and use scientific findings in ways that most scientists would not even consider.

The difference here is not merely one of philosophy or personality. Science must recognize what is and is not known in order to formulate meaningful questions for study. It must take every precaution to assure that when answers are finally obtained, they are correct. Management, however, is not charged with the task of advancing knowledge; it is responsible for the profitable operation of an enterprise. Under such conditions time becomes a crucial factor in decision making. Risk must be incurred and uncertainty accepted if decisions are to be made now, at the time when they are needed, rather than later when they have been thoroughly researched. This should not be an excuse for sloppy thinking. But it does rule out the process of long-drawn-out study which is permitted to the scientist and which on occasion is so irritating to the manager when he seeks scientific assistance.

As a result of this time pressure in decisions, management tends to bring *all* currently available information to bear. It cannot be excessively concerned about the *scientific* credibility of its sources. In many areas of managerial action, objective scientific studies are almost totally lacking. Any source of evidence or information is utilized that appears to have value. If science has provided some relevant information, it will, of course, be used. But where this is not the case, the void is characteristically filled with the wisdom and experience which have been developed in the world of practitioners. This expertise may be found between the covers of a book or in the heads of other managers, or it may be part of the experience of the man making the decision. Wherever it is found, it must be evaluated for validity and relevance, rejected or accepted on these bases, and then used along with available scientific data to reach a conclusion.

This book has been written primarily in the latter tradition, while at the same time it draws heavily on knowledge accumulated in the social sciences. It is intended as a guide for managers whose jobs require them to make decisions under some degree of uncertainty. Thus, the attempt is to integrate experience and scientific data into a series of recommendations for action. With more, and more valid, information in the future, alternative recommendations may subsequently prove to be preferable. But the book is intended as a guide to action in the here and now, not as a treatise on the state of scientific knowledge. It is for this reason that it has been entitled *The Management of Ineffective Performance* rather than *The Nature of Ineffective Performance.*

2

INTELLIGENCE AND JOB KNOWLEDGE

THE bond which unites the various concepts and ideas to be discussed in this chapter is their relationship to the intellectual sphere—to the ability to think, know, and solve problems. We will be concerned with constructs such as intelligence, mental ability, knowledge, aptitude, talent, literacy, IQ, mental deficiency, learning ability, and the like. This is an area in which a great deal of research has been conducted, originally because of the stimulus provided by educators, more recently as a result of the practical needs of military administrators, psychiatric practitioners, and industrial managers. There will be no attempt here to provide a comprehensive review of this research. Our primary interest is in a group of factors as they may be strategic in producing performance failure, not in a general knowledge of human intellectual functioning.

Nevertheless, as with most of the areas to be discussed in succeeding chapters, some reference to social science theory and the evidence which supports it is essential. It is unlikely that a performance analysis carried out without knowledge of the underlying dynamics of possible strategic factors can ever achieve a very high level of success. Some background in the social sciences, and more particularly in those aspects of psychology, sociology, political science, and anthropology which deal with human behavior in an organizational setting, appears to be a prerequisite for the effective management of ineffective performance. Some readers will, of course, take issue with this view. It is only in recent years that the social sciences have made substantial contributions to the study of performance, and much of this work has received little publicity. It is hoped that those who have some doubts regarding the practical applications of social science in this area will reserve final judgment. The evidence in this and ensuing chapters should bear upon their decision.

Initially in the present chapter, attention will be focused on background knowledge largely from the field of psychology concerning intelligence. Once the relevant theory has been presented, the next section will isolate the various aspects of intellectual functioning which may be strategic in failure. This differentiation within the intellectual sphere is important. It is not sufficient to say that a man is too dull or stupid to perform his job. More precise statements regarding causation are necessary so that realistic choices can be made between several possible types of corrective action. Thus, the chapter will move from general theory to knowledge regarding the relationship between intellectual factors and job performance, and only then to the prescription of appropriate remedies. A final section will deal with intelligence differences existing in various parts of the United States and among various groups in the population.

Theory of Intelligence

The concept of intelligence refers to the degree or extent to which an individual is ready to learn new things rapidly and solve problems (reason) correctly. Thus, mental ability is to a large extent a function of existing knowledge—at least, insofar as existing knowledge can be used as a basis for acquiring and developing further information. The man who knows very little about an area, say thermodynamics, will characteristically have much more difficulty exhibiting intellectual competence when dealing with new materials in that field than the man who has a tremendous fund of related learning. This viewpoint concerning the nature of intelligence has been elaborated in the author's *Intelligence in the United States* (12). It has been espoused by many psychologists over the past twenty years and so far has apparently withstood the test of time.

There appear to be three factors which influence the extent to which a person may possess this ability to learn, or developed capacity for reasoning, which we call intelligence. Briefly, these are: native potential, motivation to learn, and environmental stimulus potential. Each will be discussed in turn.

Native potential refers to a hypothesized characteristic of brain structure or chemistry which serves to facilitate and limit the development of what is actually manifested as intelligence. This native potential is not synonymous with intelligence; it is a *potentiality* for learning only. People presumably differ in some manner with regard to it, and this difference appears to be already established at birth through heredity. But the differences existing at this level are not likely to coincide with those found at the level of actual, manifest intelligence. Native potential influences the ease with which various degrees of mental ability may be attained and sets a top limit on the possibilities for development. Whether or not development actually occurs, however, depends on the other two factors: motivation and environment. No intelligence test measures this hereditary given. In fact, we have no way of measuring it at all. When techniques are found, they will almost certainly be physiological in nature rather than psychological.

It seems appropriate to ask, since no one has ever seen or measured a native potential, why we believe it exists as a factor in brain functioning. The evidence derives from two sources. It is known that injury to the brain may result in a sizable loss in mental ability (9). This does not always happen, and the exact nature of the loss seems to depend on a variety of factors not yet fully understood. Nevertheless, injury to the brain can affect intelligence, and injuries to other parts of the body characteristically do not. It seems likely, therefore, that something about the brain determines intelligence level.

In addition, it is known that some people are born with a very limited capacity for learning. No matter how strong the wish and how great the opportunity, they are able to learn and retain only a minimal amount. Many must be maintained in institutions for the feebleminded. This seems to indicate that there are differences in mental ability existing from birth which are comparable to the differences in physique and physical capacities that are so much more easily noted.

It is possible, of course, that native potential is a factor only at this lowest level—that intellectual development is limited by some deficiency in native potential only among those whom we consider feebleminded and that all others are born equal in this respect. There are many studies, however, which indicate a marked similarity of intelligence levels among children born to the same parents, even when these children are raised in different homes (23). Unfortunately, none of these studies has been designed with sufficient precision to provide absolutely conclusive evidence regarding the role of heredity. It is therefore conceivable, although improbable, that motivation and environment may be sufficient to account for all known differences in mental ability except those attributable to brain injury or disease and those existing at the very lowest level.

The evidence with regard to the role of motivation in intellectual development is more conclusive. It has been clearly demonstrated that the person who is actively interested in learning and developing himself, who wants to accumulate new knowledge, will in fact develop his native potential more fully, other things being equal, than the person who has no such interests. This is particularly true in childhood. Studies show (11, 19) that children who are strongly competitive, who are sufficiently independent to initiate many activities on their own, and who are motivated to achieve (who are ambitious) are likely to increase sharply in IQ. When the child tends to lean frequently on others for help, taking no interest in accomplishing things on his own, the development of intelligence is correspondingly curtailed. This view regarding the role of motivation in intellectual development is further supported by a sizable body of experimental work in the field of learning theory (10), which emphasizes the important role striving and motivation have in the learning process.

The evidence on the third factor, environmental stimulus potential, is equally strong. The richer the environment, and thus the greater the opportunity for learning, the more likely a person is to develop his native potential. Certainly if the environment is extremely barren in an intellectual sense, it makes little difference that native potential is high and motivation to learn strong. Learning will be curtailed and intelligence will suffer.

There is a considerable body of research supporting this view (23). In one study children in England who had been brought up on canalboats were tested and the intelligence of those at different age levels compared. Until about the age of six, these children scored nearly as well as those living elsewhere. But the older children, who attended school only 5 percent of the time normal for English children, were markedly deficient relative to others of a similar age. Whereas most children have a constant exposure to new material as a result of their schooling and thus continue to develop their intelligence, the canalboat children had practically exhausted the potential for learning in their environment by the age of six. A similar drop in rate of learning has been found among children living in isolated mountainous areas in the southeastern United States (parts of Tennessee and Virginia).

This influence of environmental opportunity was demonstrated in a striking manner during World War II (24). A cross section of the soldiers inducted for military service during 1943 was given the old Army Alpha Test, the intelligence test which had been used during World War I. The scores for this group of typical World War II soldiers were then compared with those obtained by soldiers who served in 1918. The comparison indicated that during the twenty-five-year period there had been a rise of 42 points, from an average of 62 to 104, in intelligence level. Seventy-eight percent of the World War II soldiers scored above the average soldier of World War I. This difference is almost certainly attributable to the marked rise in the educational level of this age group during the interim—from an average of 8.0 years of schooling to an average of 10.0. In addition, teacher quality has been increasing and the school year lengthening. As we in the United States increase the available environmental stimulus potential through greater educational opportunity, we are, it seems, also raising the intelligence level of the population.

The best available evidence suggests, then, that a person with very high intelligence must have a sizable native potential, must have possessed for a number of years (especially during childhood) a strong motivation for learning, and must have been exposed during this same period to a rich learning environment. To the extent that any of these is lacking, his intelligence will suffer and the speed of new learning will be reduced. Mental ability is definitely not a direct and unchanging product of hereditary conditions existing at birth.

The discussion up to this point has treated intelligence as a single unitary concept. Although for some purposes this approach may be desirable, it is totally inadequate for providing an understanding of the strategic factors in ineffective performance. As a result of differences in interests and motivation, as well as differences in opportunities for learning, most people develop abilities in certain areas and fail to develop them, or develop them to a lesser extent, in others. A child whose father takes apart the family car and then puts it back together again nearly every weekend is likely to develop similar interests himself. As he gets older he may work with his father and perhaps eventually buy a jalopy of his own to permit himself more freedom in experimentation. Under these circumstances one would expect a greater development of mechanical ability than in a child of equal native potential who spent most of his free time reading.

In a similar manner many other abilities develop. Intelligence is the total complex of these special abilities as they exist in the individual. Any broad area in which people can become interested and learn may potentially serve as a basis for the development of a special ability. In actual fact, however, there are only four such areas which have received widespread study, and these four appear to be the ones which are most important in job performance. They are, in order of their apparent importance for the prediction of job proficiency: verbal ability—a knowledge of words and their use; numerical ability—skill in manipulating numbers; mechanical ability—a capacity for dealing with mechanical objects and a knowledge of the principles which govern their operation; and spatial ability—skill in visualizing and relating objects in accordance with their shape and position. Tests of many other mental abilities have, of course, been developed, and a number of these have proved helpful in providing an understanding of some specific type of work performance. In addition, a great variety of tests exists which measure some limited aspect within each of the four areas mentioned. From the point of view of the manager, however, these four primary abilities are the most important, and a familiarity with them should be sufficient to permit a satisfactory performance analysis in most cases.

There has been some tendency to assume that these abilities are distributed so that everyone has at least one area in which he is outstanding. Unfortunately, the evidence does not support this view (8, 27). Although most people are somewhat more competent in certain areas than in others, and although there are certainly many instances where one or two abilities are *considerably* elevated, the most common situation is for all abilities to be at approximately the same level in a person. If one ability is well below the average, the others are likely to be similarly depressed. This finding is not too surprising in view of the information already presented about the way intelligence develops. Although a person may be more interested in one area than another, the real and important motivational differences are between people who are in a general sense competitive, active, and curious and those who are not. Similarly, environments are characteristically rich or poor in the opportunities they provide for development in all areas. Grade schools almost invariably offer the child a chance to develop verbal, numerical, mechanical, and spatial abilities nearly simultaneously, although the first two characteristically receive the greatest emphasis. These similarities between the levels of motivation to learn and environmental stimulus potential in the various areas apparently account for the sizable relationship between abilities that has been found in the population as a whole.

This discussion of the way in which the various abilities constitute intelligence has failed to mention one widely used concept and a question that is frequently raised regarding it. There are several well-known tests which are usually considered to be measures of general intelligence or IQ: the Stanford Binet, the various Wechsler scales, the Army General Classification Test, the Otis measures, etc. But how can they measure such a general characteristic if intelligence is a complex of special abilities?

It is perhaps best to note at the outset that these so-called IQ tests do not really provide information regarding a single aspect or competence. They are in fact conglomerates, which tap a variety of abilities and combine the results into a total score. Yet there is one ability which invariably predominates (12, 13): The tests of general intelligence are primarily measures of verbal ability, although several other abilities are almost always included.

There is good reason for the emphasis on verbal ability, since this appears to be the most important aspect of intelligence in our society. It occupies a position which is in many ways unique. Words and verbal structures are our primary means of communication. In a society which is advancing rapidly as new ideas and technologies develop, the transmission of knowledge takes on tremendous importance. A society in which communication was severely restricted would progress slowly, if at all. Each individual would have to start over again without benefit of the experience of other people engaged in similar efforts. Under such conditions a large number of identical "discoveries" would be made in different places at different times. The situation would be somewhat analogous on a grand scale to that produced by security regulations today. Fields such as space exploration and nuclear physics have undoubtedly been hampered in their development by limitations on communication across international borders.

In our society, then, information is transmitted largely through the written and spoken word. Teaching is primarily a verbal process. So too is thinking—because we communicate primarily with words, we tend to think with them also. This situation need not exist in all societies; other abilities may assume this superordinate position and presumably have, on occasion, throughout history. But in highly industrialized countries such as the United States, the predominance of the verbal would seem to be a necessity. It is only appropriate that the major measures of mental ability should reflect this cultural emphasis.

We have so far dealt only with the theory of intelligence as it bears on the development of broad abilities or aptitudes. There are also, of course, more limited spheres of intellectual competence which people may possess. These tend to be specific to particular jobs or job families. They represent the intellectual skills and knowledge required to perform certain kinds of work. To some extent job knowledge is unique to a specific position in a specific company. Much of this knowledge, however, has become associated with a given occupation. It is the knowledge of accounting required to perform accounting functions, the knowledge of engineering required to perform as an engineer, and the knowledge of typing, shorthand, and filing required to be a satisfactory secretary.

One additional aspect of intellectual functioning should be mentioned before turning to the relationship between intelligence and performance. There are some people who have considerable difficulty remembering things and using good judgment or common sense. Such people *may* score relatively well on most tests of mental abilities. Yet anyone who talks to them over an extended period of time is left with an indelible impression that there is something wrong with their intellectual functioning, that some deficit or deficiency exists. They may fabricate stories to cover gaps in memory, or they may complain about their inability to remember things. They may come to almost nonsensical decisions regarding appropriate courses of action in certain areas, while retaining the capacity to make rational choices in other areas. They sometimes stop rather suddenly in the middle of a sentence as if they had forgotten entirely what they were talking about.

Such people are likely to be suffering from some type of physical or emotional disorder which has produced inroads into the intellectual sphere. Reference has already been made to brain injuries and disorders. Conditions of this kind can bring about defects in memory and judgment of the type noted. Similarly, emotional disorders may carry with them a tendency to eliminate from consciousness that which is excessively disturbing, thereby producing what appears as a gap in memory. Strong emotions may influence the processes of intelligence so that decisions result which seem totally devoid of common sense and rationality. In these instances intellectual competence is reduced, but only because of factors known to be of physical or emotional origin. Brain disorder and emotional illness will be discussed at greater length in succeeding chapters.

The Performance Relationship

The generalization that verbal ability is the most important aspect of intelligence certainly holds true with regard to ineffective performance. The various jobs have what amount to minimum demands in the area of verbal ability. If a man falls below the minimum verbal level required for a given job, he is very likely to be a failure in that type of work. Yet he may easily qualify for performance in another less intellectually demanding occupation at a lower level.

For practical purposes the hierarchy of occupations may be broken into four groups or levels in accordance with the degree of verbal ability required for effective performance (12). At the top are occupations such as accountant, industrial chemist, civil engineer, bank executive, lawyer, office manager, personnel manager, sales manager, treasurer, purchasing agent, and many others of a professional or managerial nature. These positions are held by about 12 percent of the labor force. It is extremely improbable that work at this level can be performed by anyone whose verbal ability does not place him in the upper half of the working population. The specific lower boundary in terms of verbal ability will, of course, vary with the particular occupation and with the type of standards established in a given company. Lawyers and physical scientists, for instance, must be in at least the top 30 percent (29). Within one group of over forty successful officers of large corporations, there were no men whose tested verbal ability fell below the top twenty-five percent (14). Presumably, people of lower ability were on occasion promoted into these top executive positions but were unable to maintain an effective level of performance in competition with the more talented group they were in. As part of the same study, a number of distinguished professors in major colleges and universities were also tested. All were well into the upper 20 percent of the population in the verbal area.

The second level of occupations contains largely skilled workers and lower-level supervisors: carpenters, clerk-typists, maintenance foremen, service station managers, plumbers, salesmen, timekeepers, credit investigators, surveyors, automobile mechanics, etc. This group includes about 32 percent of the labor force. Anyone falling in the lower 25 percent on verbal ability is very likely to fail if placed in a job of this type. Of course, because of standards established for an occupation in a certain company, many specific positions will require intelligence considerably above this level.

The third group is semiskilled. The occupations included make up some 38 percent of the working population. Typical jobs are: boilermaker, bulldozer operator, knitting machine operator, receptionist, truck driver, drill press operator, salesclerk, watchman, shipping clerk, mechanic's helper. Anyone in the upper 90 percent of the labor force should be capable of performing effectively insofar as verbal intelligence is concerned. Below that level the failure rate can be expected to rise rapidly.

The fourth and lowest group includes 18 percent of the jobs. The work is all unskilled: construction laborer, elevator operator, loader, janitor, longshoreman, butcher's helper, packer, dishwasher, mason's helper, bootblack, etc. This kind of position can be filled by almost anyone. The intellectual demands are minimal. Most unskilled jobs do not require a high level of literacy; a number require none at all. The only group that might be excluded from them would be the roughly 2 percent of the population which is generally classified as feebleminded (28). Actually, some at this very low level can hold unskilled jobs for a period of time; many more are institutionalized and thus not even potentially a part of the labor force.

The extent to which verbal ability influences occupational level is strikingly illustrated in an extensive study of the life histories of gifted children (21). During the early 1920s approximately fifteen hundred children whose general intelligence placed them in the top 10 percent of the population were identified. All were in California schools. The average age at the time of selection for the study was eleven, and the children have been followed through the ensuing years.

For our purposes the crucial data in the study are those bearing on occupational attainment. At the time of the 1955 follow-up, roughly thirty-five years after the initial testing, 80 percent of those who were employed were working in level 1 occupations of the professional or managerial type. Thus 80 percent of a group at the very highest level in verbal ability had jobs which are attained by only about 12 percent of the population. Another 18 percent of the gifted group were in level 2 positions doing work of a skilled or supervisory nature, and only 2 percent were at level 3 in semiskilled jobs. Not one was in a level 4 position. Unemployment in the technical sense (available for work but not working) was almost nonexistent, although many of the group were housewives, incapacitated, etc.

Once the minimum verbal demands are met for a certain job, other factors become important in influencing the level of performance. Some are intellectual in nature; some are emotional, motivational, or physical. The discussion here will deal with the intellectual sphere and leave the other areas for subsequent chapters.

The intellectual factors aside from verbal ability which are important in performance tend to be specific to various occupations and jobs. Numerical ability, for instance, must be at a relatively high level in occupations such as accountant, office manager, production manager, pharmacist, treasurer, and comptroller. Mechanical ability is required among airline pilots, contractors, electricians, mechanics, and certain types of engineers. Spatial ability is crucial for architects, artists, civil engineers, and surveyors. Moreover, verbal ability acts not only as a determinant of occupational level, but also is required in additional increments, and thus acts as a special ability of considerable importance, in occupations such as college professor, industrial relations specialist, lawyer, corporate officer, and writer. A lack of these appropriate special abilities may well prove to be strategic in performance failure.

It is evident that a manager faced with the necessity of determining what has caused a given instance of ineffective performance must have some knowledge of the abilities required in the jobs which he supervises. The examples already noted were drawn primarily from higher-level occupations. What about other kinds of work?

To some extent an intimate knowledge of job duties will provide a picture of the abilities which are necessary. Especially if he is taking over the direction of a new activity, the supervisor will find that a careful perusal of job descriptions and specifications can be very helpful, even when statements are not specifically made in terms of intelligence requirements. In addition, the United States Employment Service has accumulated a large body of information regarding the ability requirements of various occupations as a result of extensive work with the General Aptitude Test Battery. Similar information is also available from other sources (4, 17, 22).

We have not yet mentioned a man's knowledge of his specific job as an intellectual factor in performance, but the relationship between such knowledge and effectiveness is almost self-evident. Responsibility for determining requirements in this area falls primarily on the manager himself. Certainly any effective manager should know what the duties of his various subordinates are. Without this knowledge he is likely to have difficulty establishing realistic standards and dealing with ineffective performance generally. Ideally, he would have learned about the jobs which he supervises through experience in identical or similar work, or perhaps through working closely with other individuals who have accumulated this experience. Other sources, not perhaps as good but still helpful, are training manuals and job descriptions, as well as discussions with individual subordinates.

The identification of intellectual factors which are strategic in ineffective performance is not always easy. The best procedure where determinants of this type are suspected is to compare the individual's test scores with those obtained by men performing similar work. Does the man score very low relative to others on a measure of general intelligence or verbal ability? Does he score low on tests of special abilities known to be important in performance? Does he do poorly on achievement tests tapping the specific knowledge required? Does he fail to measure up to others on tests of memory functioning or judgment?

Unfortunately, this kind of comparison based on the specific factors thought to be strategic is not always possible. Observation of behavior *in situ* (at work) and discussions with the man may be the only sources of information available. Or psychological testing may be appropriate only as a means of checking one hypothesis, such as the possibility of insufficient verbal ability, and the testing of other hypotheses may be limited to whatever can be learned from conversations and observation of behavior.

The usual signs of difficulty in the intellectual area are an excessive number of mistakes and slowness in learning. People who are lacking in the appropriate mental ability characteristically take an unusual amount of time to learn new tasks. This slowness in learning the unfamiliar may stand in marked contrast to a considerable competence in dealing with material to which there has been long exposure. In wartime, men of low intelligence who have spent their whole lives in rural areas and performed there in an entirely satisfactory manner often find it impossible to adjust to the very different demands of the military (6). There is too much that is new to be comprehended and absorbed.

The same result often occurs when men of limited abilities are faced with completely new industrial job demands. Difficulty is particularly likely if the man has moved to a different living environment at the same time, say from a rural area to the city. The diagnostic task is made more complex by the necessity of determining whether trouble at this early stage is due to ability lack or insufficient job knowledge. If the usual training has been completed and adequate learning has not occurred, there is likely to be a deficiency in intelligence. However, if training has been short-circuited but there is evidence of previous intellectual accomplishment by a man, such as would be indicated by his having acquired a college degree or having passed the tests for a military commission, it is probably job knowledge that is deficient.

The problems of the manager are compounded by the fact that slow learning of job duties and silly mistakes are not the only manifestations of intellectual difficulties. A man may attempt to avoid jobs that he does not understand or that he knows he cannot handle intellectually. As a result he may appear to be "goofing off" or insubordinate rather than lacking in mental ability or knowledge. A comprehensive performance analysis in such instances requires that additional information be obtained either from the man himself or from tests. The manager should also try forcing compliance and observe the results, since it is important to determine what would happen if avoidance were not possible.

In other instances men may appear insubordinate because they lack the mental ability which would permit them to grasp company rules and regulations rapidly. A worker may get in trouble, for instance, if he consistently disobeys safety regulations which he does not understand. Often in such situations the manager involved, being of considerably higher intelligence himself, cannot believe that "anyone could be so stupid." He assumes that the problem is basically of an emotional or motivational nature—that the man is a troublemaker. Therefore the manager fails to ask the direct questions which would provide information on the extent of actual knowledge.

There are other ways in which intellectual deficiency relative to job demands may manifest itself. Faced with a situation which makes him feel constantly incompetent and inadequate, a man who lacks the appropriate verbal ability, special ability, or job knowledge may become emotionally upset. The experience of being continually expected to perform tasks which are beyond one's intellectual capacity is a very unpleasant one. Eventually a man's feeling of being in over his head is likely to take its toll. Severe emotional disorders do, on occasion, result from such situations. More frequently the emotional reaction is transitory. The man is touchy, gets mad with little provocation, or often feels anxious and upset. In any case the underlying strategic factor is likely to be masked by the emotional problems, which, although they may also be strategic, are not the most important determinants of failure.

Procedures for Improving Performance

The preceding discussion has indicated several different routes through which intellectual factors can influence performance. The reason for distinguishing between them will become increasingly clear as we turn to the matter of corrective action. There is no universal solution to difficulties arising out of the strategic factors discussed in this chapter. What will work with one kind of problem will not necessarily work with another.

If verbal ability appropriate to the job level is lacking, demotion appears to be the best answer. Studies conducted by British psychologists during World War II (25, 26) established that performance in a new job was best predicted from a knowledge of effectiveness in very similar positions. But where such comparisons could not be made—as where prior experience in similar work was lacking—a measure of general intelligence or verbal ability was the most valuable indicator. Furthermore, if a man failed in a job, shifting him to some other type of work at the same level frequently proved unsatisfactory. The man was very likely to fail again even when he had expressed interest in the new position. Demotion, on the other hand, characteristically served to produce both effective performance and, in the long run, a happier individual.

To shift a man to a lower position in this manner, and thereby reduce his salary or place a lower limit on the salary to which he may aspire, is not an easy task for any manager. In fact, it is probably the most difficult personnel action there is. Firing is usually much easier, since the man is quickly gone, and any guilt and remorse that the manager responsible may experience is thus more easily forgotten. In the case of demotion the man is constantly present to serve as a reminder of the unpleasantness involved.

For this reason many firms rarely, if ever, demote an employee, even when the man himself would prefer such action to remaining in his present position or being dismissed. On one occasion when a company psychologist recommended a very sizable reduction in grade to overcome the difficulties associated with overplacement, it took two years of gradual demotion and continued ineffectiveness before the man was finally placed in a job at a low enough level to permit him actually to contribute to organizational goals. Those responsible for the decision could not bring themselves to carry out the type of drastic demotion the psychologist had recommended. This was in spite of the fact that the man wanted to be demoted and would have been much happier if the action could have been taken all at one time. Such instances are not uncommon. Perhaps reducing a man in grade is more easily accomplished if one realizes that there is no other practical way of salvaging him as an effective performer. Such is in fact the case when overplacement in verbal ability has occurred.

Once it is evident that the person is appropriately placed in level, the various special abilities become important. If there is a deficiency in this respect, it may be possible to transfer the individual to another position at approximately the same level which is more consistent with his particular constellation of abilities. This should be done with knowledge, not on a random basis. It should be clear that the man is failing in his present position because he lacks the necessary spatial, mechanical, or numerical ability, or the verbal ability in additional increments to what is required for the job level. It should also be clear that he possesses the specific abilities which will contribute to success in the new position.

These recommendations have been based on the assumption that mental abilities in adults are essentially static and that therefore the job must be adjusted to the individual rather than the individual to the job. This is only partially true. Intelligence level does change. If abilities go unused for long periods of time and there is no opportunity for practicing what has been learned, some decline may occur (20). Even verbal ability, which might be expected to receive constant use and practice, has been found to diminish slightly in certain groups which have spent long periods in institutions for the emotionally disturbed and incapacitated (1, 15). Other research, which will be discussed shortly, indicates that verbal ability tends to rise slowly throughout the adult years in a sizable segment of the population.

But these are all gradual changes. Is it possible in a relatively short period of time to raise an individual's abilities so that he can perform effectively in a job for which he previously lacked the appropriate intelligence? Or are there instances in which intelligence level has decreased markedly over a period of a few months? Allowing for the errors of measurement inherent in testing instruments and the conditions under which they must be administered, sizable short-term decreases probably occur only when there has been some damage to the brain. Increases, on the other hand, do apparently occur in certain individuals with concentrated training. The optimum conditions seem to be a very low initial level of ability and a situation where the deficiency is clearly a function of limited opportunity rather than insufficient native potential.

Experience in Army Special Training Units during World War II (5) indicated that men who were considered incapable of performing effectively because of illiteracy and low intelligence could frequently be helped through intensive training. The training attempted to raise the men to at least a fourth-grade intellectual level in, at the most, a four-month period. In one group of 400 men who were studied intensively, 86 percent completed the training successfully and were given duty assignments. The remainder proved to be untrainable within the time allocated and were discharged. Evaluations at completion of service indicated that 7 percent of the original 400 served in an outstanding manner, 24 percent were rated good, and 41 percent were acceptable. There is little question that training and short-term education did salvage many who would otherwise have failed. A more recent study (2) of a group of "unemployable" mental deficients who received five months of special vocational training yielded similar results. Sixty percent of those who were trained were able to get and keep satisfactory jobs. Only 20 percent of a similar group which did not receive such training achieved the same status.

Thus intensive training can raise many people with marked deficiencies in mental ability to at least a satisfactory level. Probably similar, although not as spectacular, changes could be attained with those whose intelligence is initially at a higher level. In actuality, however, such increases in ability appear to be very rare. Among working adults opportunities and motivation for extensive, concentrated new learning are at a minimum. If a man is holding a job of any kind, he cannot devote the same amount of time and effort to learning as he did in earlier years as a student.

The implication is that companies probably could bring about changes in the mental abilities of ineffective employees if they were willing to assume a sizable cost in terms of lost work time and training charges. Under normal circumstances, however, demoting or transferring the men and replacing them with qualified workers is probably more likely to produce an effective performance level while keeping costs to a fraction of what they would be with a special training program. This is only true, of course, when replacements with appropriate abilities are available. In other instances, as when a company is operating in one of the underdeveloped countries and must rely on the local populace for manpower, an investment in extensive educational programs designed to raise intelligence levels may be the only possible solution. But most companies in the United States cannot afford to move strongly into the field of general education, as the Army did in wartime, and still maintain a competitive position in their industry. In our social system the responsibility for educational development is allocated primarily to the individual and to the society as a whole, not to the business segment.

This is not the case, however, in the area of job knowledge. Characteristically, companies must furnish any training that is unique to the particular firm or industry, largely because society is generally unwilling to do so. In times of occupational shortages a firm may have to move into more general occupational and professional training also, in order to compete for personnel. Certainly where performance failure is attributable to a lack of specific knowledge, the appropriate solution is some type of training or education. Whether this will be provided within the company, outside the company but at company expense, or entirely through outside resources depends on many factors—the availability of training, the length of training, employee interests, etc. When the employee has no desire to increase his knowledge of a job, or when training is not feasible because of insufficient facilities or excessive duration, it may be necessary to transfer rather than train him.

In summary, performance is most likely to be improved by demotion when there is a lack of verbal ability, by transfer at the same level when job-related special abilities are insufficient, and by training when inadequate job knowledge is strategic. However, when deficiencies in memory or judgment are caused by brain disorder or emotional illness, the intellectual problems can be handled only by taking some action with regard to the underlying physical or emotional factors. These problems will be treated in subsequent chapters.

Intelligence in the United States

It is evident that differentiating between the various possible strategic factors of an intellectual nature is both important and difficult, especially when adequate test data are lacking for an ineffective employee. Information on the distribution of mental ability in the population can therefore be of value to a manager in formulating hypotheses. If he knows the general intellectual level in groups of which the employee is a member, he may be able to make an initial guess about the role of mental ability in the failure. He may also be able to eliminate certain possibilities as extremely unlikely.

The figures which form the basis for this discussion were obtained from a short verbal-ability test administered to a cross section of the United States population over nine years of age (12). The testing was done by Gallup Poll interviewers on a door-to-door basis. The test, although it contains only twenty questions, appears to be a relatively good index of general intelligence (13). Although comprehensive information on abilities other than verbal ability is not available, it seems probable from knowledge of the relationship between abilities in the population and from smaller-scale studies (8) that when large differences in verbal ability appear between groups, similar, although perhaps less striking, differences will also appear in other areas such as the numerical and mechanical. Where the verbal differences between groups are relatively small, this assumption will not necessarily hold.

The findings regarding education are among the most impressive. Average scores rise steadily with successively higher levels of attainment. People with no schooling have 7 questions right, on the average. A score of 13 or more would be very unusual indeed for a person who had not attended school. Yet the average person who has graduated from college has a score of almost 15. Only about 5 percent of the people whose education stopped during or immediately after grade school develop verbal ability equal to that which is normal for college graduates.

The differences between the various occupational groups are almost as pronounced. In the four levels of the occupational hierarchy, there is a rise from 9 questions right among the unskilled workers at level 4 to almost 15 right among the managerial and professional workers at level 1. Practically none of those in unskilled jobs possesses verbal ability equal to the average for the top occupational level.

Negro-white comparisons are consistent with the lower educational and occupational status of the Negro group as a whole. The average scores are 8 and 11. Only a very small proportion of Negroes possess verbal ability above the level of the average college graduate. These observed differences do not, of course, directly reflect underlying differences in native potential. Environmental stimulus potential, including education, is markedly reduced in Negro groups. Some recent research has also shown that certain personality characteristics of a kind that almost certainly restrict motivation to learn, interact sharply with intelligence level among Negroes (18). Presumably these personality characteristics are in turn produced by the deprived environments in which many Negroes live. In any event it seems evident that a much greater motivation to learn is a major factor in the higher average intelligence of whites. Whether or not racial differences in native potential remain after these other factors are accounted for is still an open question. At best, the differences in native potential must be very small. Considerable research evidence indicates that there is a great deal of room for the development of existing potential in the Negro group—that a sizable amount of learning can occur under appropriate conditions of environment and motivation. The extremely high test scores obtained by certain individual Negroes provide striking evidence of what can be accomplished.

The sexes scored at approximately the same level on verbal ability in the national survey. Evidence from other sources based on different tests suggests, however, that women may well be slightly superior (28). In any event, the difference appears to be negligible and of little practical significance. This is not the case, however, in the numerical area. Men in our society develop a considerably higher level of numerical competence than do women.

When rural areas and the cities are compared, some slight superiority of the urban areas does emerge. However, generalizations regarding rural-urban differences have little practical value. There are apparently areas where the population resides exclusively on farms or in small towns which have a rather high average level of verbal ability, and there are many cities where the average is low. The crucial considerations appear to be opportunity and migration (7). Where economic opportunity is limited, some skimming off of the higher intelligence levels is likely to occur as people seek a chance to prosper elsewhere. Although this pattern of migration tends, generally, to be from rural to urban areas, it may be from city to city. There are certainly many prosperous farm areas where no such loss of high-intelligence people occurs.

Geographical differences between the various regions of the country are more pronounced. The Deep South (South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas) is low, with an average score somewhat below 10. The West Central region (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas) scores only slightly higher. At the other extreme is the Pacific Coast (California, Oregon, and Washington) where the average is just under 12. The other areas are between these extremes; the averages for New England, the Middle Atlantic states, the East Central area, the Border South, and the Rocky Mountain states are all very similar.

Religion appears to be a differentiating factor in only one respect: The Jewish group with a score just under 13 is clearly superior to the rest of the population, which averages somewhat less than 11. This superiority is reflected in the generally higher educational and occupational attainment of the Jews. Again the question of racial differences in native potential may be raised with reference to a minority group. But in this comparison, unlike that of Negroes and whites, it is the minority group which would be better endowed. It is conceivable that such a difference in native potential does, in fact, exist, but if this is the case, the difference is likely to be small. Jewish culture places strong emphasis on education and learning, and professional occupations are highly valued. As a result, a strong motivation to learn is implanted in most Jewish children at an early age. This in and of itself may well be sufficient to account for the differences noted.

Verbal ability is also related to age, although in a rather complex manner. The scores rise steadily in the successive young age groups, reaching an average of 9 in the early teens. By the early twenties the rate of increase begins to slow, but there is nevertheless some rise to about the age of forty, where the average score is over 11.5. After that, each successively older age group has lower scores. People over seventy-five are at approximately the same average level as the fifteen-year-olds. Other abilities appear to follow essentially the same pattern, although they generally reach their peak at an earlier age than verbal ability does. For most purposes associated with work performance and managerial decision making, this information on the relative positions of various age groups in the population is the most important. Older workers and the very young are likely to be the least intelligent.

There is good reason to believe, however, that this similarity between the two extreme age groups cannot be attributed primarily to some process of deterioration which occurs in people of more advanced age. The intelligence of each individual does not rise to about age forty and then decline. The younger groups are less intelligent because they are still in a period of education and learning; development is still progressing rapidly. The older people are less intelligent because they terminated their education at a considerably lower point than people now in middle age. The older groups have not declined from a previously higher level of intelligence; they have characteristically never been above their present level. The average educational attainment, as noted previously, has been rising steadily in the United States for many years. In 1953, when the study of verbal ability in the population was conducted, only slightly over 30 percent of the people aged fifty-five and up had more than an eighth-grade education. At the same time almost 70 percent of those in the peak intelligence group, the thirty-five to forty-five category, had gone beyond the eighth grade. These educational differences are sufficient to account for the lower scores in the older groups.

It appears that, at least among those of above-average intelligence (this would include most people in our occupational levels 1 and 2), verbal ability actually rises throughout life (12). There may be a slight decline in some people during the late seventies and eighties, but in general, learning apparently continues and intelligence develops throughout most of our lives. The rate of increase is, however, relatively slow in later years.

This rise in intelligence with increased learning and experience has been demonstrated in a number of studies. The gifted group originally tested while attending school in California has been retested twice since (21), and there is clear evidence of a steady rise in mental ability. In another study a group of people originally tested on admission to college were traced and retested thirty-one years later. Verbal ability showed considerable improvement, but numerical ability remained at approximately the same level (16).

These studies did not deal with changes occurring after about the age of fifty-five. A study which did include the older group compared the verbal ability of beginning teachers (average age twenty-two), teachers (average age forty-six), and retired teachers (average age sixty-seven). The three groups were almost identical in educational level, yet test scores increased steadily with age (3).

There are, then, marked differences in the level of intelligence characteristic of various groups. A knowledge of these differences can be very helpful to the manager who must undertake a performance analysis. Performance failure due to deficiencies in mental ability would be very unlikely in a Jewish college graduate of mature years who was employed in an executive position and lived in a prosperous suburban area near a large city on the West Coast. Such a person would almost certainly be above the minimum acceptable level on verbal ability for any occupation. He would probably be equally proficient in any special abilities required for his work. He might, however, be inadequately trained and thus lacking in job knowledge. The possession of mental ability does not guarantee that it will have been used to accumulate a specific type of information.

On the other hand, a young man in his late teens, perhaps a Negro, with only a few grades of schooling, and living on a poor farm in the Deep South would present a very different set of probabilities. Should such a person prove to be ineffective when placed in a position above the unskilled level, there would be good reason to believe that verbal ability and the requisite special abilities, as well as appropriate job knowledge, are strategic.

3

EMOTIONS AND EMOTIONAL ILLNESS

It has been common practice to consider the characteristic emotional and motivational patterns exhibited by human beings as aspects of personality. Many people, in fact, speak of personality traits without differentiating between those of a primarily emotional nature, such as chronic pessimism, aggressiveness, and nervousness, and those that are basically motivational, such as dominance, conformity, and dedication to work. The reason for making the distinction here and treating emotions in a separate chapter from motivation is purely practical. The use of the single concept, personality, would mask differences of considerable practical importance insofar as managerial action to improve performance is concerned.

Since we are interested specifically in those emotions which may be strategic for ineffective performance, the emphasis must be on feelings of a less pleasant nature—anxiety and fear, shame and guilt, grief and depression. There will also be some mention of anger, hatred, jealousy, and extreme excitement. The nature of the objective precludes anything but the most superficial reference to the positive emotions—love, happiness, joy, and the like. Much of the discussion will be devoted to emotional illness, because it is primarily, although not exclusively, through this route that emotions influence job performance.

The first part of the chapter will deal entirely with emotional disturbance or illness, drawing on the fields of clinical psychology and psychiatry to provide some understanding of these disorders. Because managers are frequently called upon to make decisions in this area, considerable space will be devoted to the problem of identification and to the description and analysis of symptoms. The next section will delineate how emotions in healthy persons and emotions in their pathological manifestations may interfere with work performance. The various methods of improving performance and of therapy will then be taken up. A special section will be devoted to alcoholism, an area of major significance for industrial management. Finally, as in the preceding chapter, relationships and differences existing among various groups will be discussed.

Some readers may be concerned about the propriety of including such a lengthy discussion of topics generally considered of interest to clinical psychologists, and psychiatrists only. A number may feel that the diagnosis and treatment of emotional disorder should be specifically reserved to the professionally qualified and that, therefore, even limited information should not be provided to those without specific training in the area. The old saw "A little knowledge is a bad thing" is often quoted in this connection.

This position is without question valid insofar as the detailed diagnosis and treatment of severe emotional disorders are concerned. These are tasks which should be reserved to those with professional training. It is also true that some people with a limited knowledge of abnormal psychology have said and done things which have had negative consequences for the emotional adjustment of others. But a manager needs some knowledge in this area to perform effectively. And the judicious application of such knowledge can be of sizable benefit to the man as well as the company. In the presentation of this material, however, every effort will be made to provide guidelines which should serve to minimize the possibility of inappropriate application.

The Nature of Emotional Disorder

It is important to note at the outset the relationship between our term *emotional disorder* and the more widely used *mental disorder*. We hear much of mental disease, mental hospitals, mental treatment. In a general sense the two terms refer to the same thing. Mental disorder, however, has a somewhat broader connotation. It includes intellectual deficiency and disorders involving specific brain damage as well as conditions directly attributable to emotional problems. Since it is only the latter that will concern us here, the more specific term emotional disorder is appropriate.

The borderline between emotional health and illness is difficult to establish. Basically, emotional disorder is defined in terms of symptoms, but the relationship is not a simple one. Certain types of emotional responses, behaviors, ideas, perceptions, motives, and physical conditions are considered indicative of illness. Yet the specific designation of a symptom varies from society to society, and even on occasion among groups within a single society. There is a degree of cultural relativism involved. The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia and other tribes of the Pacific Northwest, for instance, engage in grandiose activities on a regular, ritualized basis which according to our standards would be considered symptomatic of severe emotional disturbance (32). Another example is provided by a man who, even though discharged from the military service as insane, was able to assume a position as a minister shortly after returning to his hometown in the rural Southeast. He retained that position and was treated as an honored member of his community in spite of the fact that for some time he continued to exhibit the same symptoms that had brought about his discharge. In fact, it was largely because of these "symptoms" that he was selected for his job by the congregation (38).

Clearly, there is no single, all-inclusive definition of emotional illness based on the classification of symptoms alone, even though many such definitions have been proposed. Almost invariably these definitions emphasize one group of symptoms at the expense of others (42). Consistency and severity of manifestation must also be taken into account, and perhaps other factors would be included in an ideal definition as well. Certainly, symptoms which are not persistently in evidence cannot be considered indicative of a true disorder; neither can those which have little impact on the individual's pattern of life. An occasional manifestation of what appears for the moment to be emotional illness may occur in anyone. Many people generally considered relatively stable are not entirely free of symptoms, and some suffer from a rather large number. The presence of symptoms alone is not sufficient to warrant a diagnosis of emotional illness.

If we observe people who are considered emotionally disturbed, however, one factor appears to be consistently present. There is a lack of flexibility, a rigidity, which makes it impossible for these people to adapt to the demands of the world around them (44). The individual not only possesses certain symptoms, but the symptoms appear to take over and exercise almost absolute control. They disrupt the ongoing process of life and impose new patterns irrespective of what might otherwise be the person's wishes. These new patterns possess a compulsive inflexibility; they do not change with changes in the existing, real world.

This disruption of the ongoing processes of existence may occur in one or more of a number of areas—work, love and family life, social relationships generally, recreation and enjoyment of leisure, responses to legal controls. Although from a managerial viewpoint the disruption in work is the most significant, it is important to note that symptoms frequently spread from one area of life to another, and that events in a nonwork area may subsequently have consequences for the employment relationship.

At least one unique characteristic which may serve to define emotional disorder, then, is the presence of symptoms which disrupt the ongoing process of life in the manner described. People whose symptoms are not disruptive in this manner are not normally considered emotionally ill.

They may retain sufficient flexibility to permit them to continue their normal life patterns with minimal change and to adapt to varying circumstances as they occur. Although such people are not characteristically diagnosed as emotionally disturbed, they may gain very little happiness from life. Similarly, people may possess symptoms which are so attuned to the demands of their existing situation that no disruption occurs. The minister in the Southern farm community presumably maintained what was considered an adequate adjustment because his symptoms fitted the expectations of his parishioners. Unfortunately, such people lack the flexibility necessary to adapt to changing circumstances. Should their worlds change, their symptoms will almost certainly make it impossible to adjust to the new circumstances in the same way that the minister was unable to adjust to military demands.

What kinds of symptoms are likely to be indicative of emotional problems? The list is a long one. Yet the manager must be able to determine when he is dealing with an emotional disorder in a subordinate, and a knowledge of symptoms will help him acquire a sensitivity to the existence of problems in this area. The list which follows is based on a study of over seventy people suffering from a great many different kinds of disturbances. It does not include every possible manifestation of emotional illness, but it is sufficiently comprehensive to provide a working knowledge in the area.

One type of symptom involves the persistent and intense experiencing of certain emotions—anxiety, fear, panic, depression, grief, guilt, shame, worry, anger, jealousy, belligerence. At such times people may describe themselves as upset, nervous, tense, or irritable. They may have a feeling of "going all to pieces." They may experience an intense yearning for the presence of certain other people, such as a parent or spouse. Fears can refer to almost any type of catastrophe—death, injury, illness, going crazy, being considered a homosexual, losing control of one's bodily functions, etc. The emotion may be precipitated by many different kinds of situations or by the thought of being in such a situation. Flying in an airplane, loud noises, darkness when alone, high places, being in the water, closed and stuffy rooms, school examinations, being criticized or reprimanded, crowded places, traveling in buses or trains, and being ordered to do something are perhaps typical.

Since emotional experiences of this type are likely to be extremely unpleasant, we characteristically develop various techniques to protect ourselves from being exposed to them. We bring forth defenses which are successful to varying degrees in warding off emotional experiences. These defenses act to insulate us from situations which might arouse intensely unpleasant emotions (36). Symptoms may reflect this attempt to avoid feelings, or they may involve a direct manifestation of emotion. Most frequently there is a combination of the two.

In direct manifestation, emotions are expressed not only in the realm of conscious awareness, but also through certain types of behavior and through physiological changes. All these types of expression can serve as avenues for the manifestation of symptoms. In attempting to ward off or defend against emotions, people may resort to an even more diverse array of symptoms—physical disorders and sensations; all kinds of behaviors; certain types of ideas, perceptions and distortions of intellectual processes. The following paragraphs will treat these in detail.

Physical disorders and conditions which may arise as a result of emotional problems include: headaches; nausea and vomiting, especially after meals; feelings of pervasive physical weakness, often combined with dizziness or fainting; constant fatigue, to the point where getting out of bed in the morning becomes extremely difficult; constipation and diarrhea, frequently alternating; inability to speak, or speech defects such as stuttering; paralysis of various parts of the body; various skin rashes, especially on the face and hands; profuse sweating, most frequently of the palms; hand and body tremors and trembling, occasionally combined with more specific uncontrolled jerking movements involving muscles of the face or body; rapid breathing or difficulty in breathing, often with pounding of the heart; stomach pains or cramps, sometimes with ulcer formation; sudden loss of weight; aches and pains in various parts of the body, mainly the lower back and legs; frequent motion sickness; blurring, and on occasion loss, of vision; numbness of certain parts of the body. All these symptoms may, of course, be produced by factors other than those of an emotional nature. In addition, there are a variety of beliefs and feelings, some of them quite bizarre, which, although they concern the body and physical functioning, are probably more appropriately considered as symptoms of a perceptual or intellective nature. These will be discussed shortly.

Another group of symptoms involves behavior directly, or to be more precise, the motivation which precedes and determines behavior. People engage in certain activities and fail to engage in others either as a direct expression of emotion or in an effort to avoid certain emotional experiences. To the extent that these responses have become to some degree inflexible, they may be considered potentially indicative of emotional illness. Examples are: attempting suicide; frequent bed-wetting; excessive drinking; sleepwalking; excessive use of drugs; outbreaks of uncontrolled rage involving homicidal attacks or the breaking of objects such as furniture; exposing the genitals in public; restlessness and agitation, such as is manifested by constant pacing or movement of the arms; rape; banging the head against a wall; excessive accidental injuries; washing part or all of the body at regular and very frequent intervals; shrinking away from people; standing woodenly in one place or position; writing threatening letters to people in high places; sulking and brooding; peculiar and childish behavior such as writing on walls or smearing feces; compulsive theft.

In addition, there are behavioral symptoms which involve an inability or refusal to do certain things, such as engage in social activities, bathe, leave home or a bed, go to sleep without long hours of wakefulness, eat or drink, engage in sexual activity, read or write, sit down in a chair, control bodily functions, dress properly. On occasion apathy, listlessness, and indifference may become so pronounced as to produce an almost total lack of responsiveness. The individual appears completely preoccupied and withdrawn from the world or becomes comatose.

Finally, there are behavioral symptoms which have to do with the manner of speaking or communicating: talking to oneself; crying and sobbing; frequent threats of suicide or homicide; inappropriate smiling and smirking which sometimes develops into senseless laughter; excessively rapid speech which continues without interruption for long periods of time; wild and inappropriate yelling; incoherent muttering, occasionally combined with drooling; shouting or screaming during sleep; constant bemoaning of one's lot or protestation of guilt; continued and senseless lying, frequently with a view to self-aggrandizement; confused and incoherent speech, often involving references to religious topics, members of the family, or death.

This section has dealt with symptoms of a physical nature and those involving behavior and its motivation. A third grouping covers symptoms of thought, perception, and belief, some of which were mentioned briefly in the preceding chapter. Either emotions distort intellectual processes so that intelligence is not fully utilized, or distorted thought processes serve to defend against the experiencing of disturbing emotion. In many instances there is a complete failure of intellectual functioning: inability to concentrate or pay attention; inability to think through problems to any solution; failure of memory, either of recent events or of personally important events of the past; elimination from awareness of thoughts, wishes, and events which might produce unpleasant emotional experiences; inability to reach a decision between alternatives. Or the symptoms may involve certain ideas or beliefs which lack foundation in fact. The degree of conviction may vary from a mere notion that such a thing might happen to absolute certainty that it has already occurred. Such ideas may refer to many things, such as: having a tight belt around one's chest, feeling something crawling over one's flesh, receiving a visitation from God, being constantly watched by other people, living in a strange and unreal world, having a venereal disease, being talked about and made fun of behind one's back, having no body, being already dead, having one's body gradually rot away, having some individual or group such as the FBI or "the Communists" try to bring about one's death, being taken advantage of and abused by others, having a devil inside which propels one's actions, being controlled by some mysterious external force, being totally invisible, having committed some terrible crime, being covered with an evil-smelling liquid, being an unrecognized genius, knowing that the continents are being gradually inundated by the oceans, being a famous person, or being God. Such beliefs may be coupled with constant suspiciousness, confused thinking, placing the blame for one's own shortcomings and failures on others, nightmares, and periods of delirium. There may also be distortions of perception, as, for instance, hearing voices shouting and cursing, seeing people or objects in the dark, being visited by a loved one who has died, hearing someone try to seduce one into homosexual activities, etc.

In all these instances it is assumed that the perception or belief lacks foundation in fact. The manager who suspects the existence of an emotional disorder would do well to check on this before jumping to conclusions, however. A man from the hill country of the "Hatfields and McCoys" was hospitalized because of his repeated contention that someone shot at him every time he used the toilet. Belated investigation revealed that the outhouse near his home had in fact been under fire for some time.

It is evident that many emotional symptoms, even some of the most bizarre beliefs and behaviors, may not manifest themselves in the presence of the man's superiors at work. Many are of a kind which would be very unlikely to attract attention unless the man were to mention them specifically. It is for these reasons that emotional disturbances may go undetected for long periods of time even when work performance itself is totally unsatisfactory. The writer remembers with some chagrin two occasions when he failed to note severe emotional symptoms in secretaries doing work for him. In both instances the nature of the difficulties did not become apparent until the young women asked for help in obtaining treatment. A person may be severely upset inside and give very little evidence of it. A lengthy conversation should, however, produce some hints regarding symptoms in most severe cases.

The idea that symptoms may act to ward off unpleasant emotions, or more specifically, to ward off the impulses and thoughts which have the potential for arousing such emotions, is important for an adequate understanding of emotional disturbances. The role of physical symptoms in this regard will be discussed when the whole matter of physical illness is taken up, in Chapter 5. Similarly, many aspects of the relationship between emotions and the motivation of behavior will be included in Chapter 4, which deals with individual motivation. The discussion here will, however, elaborate on the nature of intellective defenses. It is in this area that the role of defenses in warding off emotions, particularly anxiety, has been most fully developed.

The basic nature of this self-protective process may be illustrated through a discussion of two primary defenses (56). The first involves a denial that some aspect of the world outside oneself is threatening. The person fails to see or hear something or someone that would precipitate anxiety and fear. Or he so distorts his perceptions and thought that the threat is somehow removed. A man leaves on a business trip the day he is scheduled to discuss the results of his management appraisal evaluation with his boss—or he skips over the section on traits of personality and character when asked to read the evaluation. In more extreme cases, daydreams and imagined voices or images may be called upon to blot out the threat from the outside world. Loved ones who have recently died may be restored to life. Personal criticism from others may be replaced by hallucinated adoration. The overpowering terror that achieves its major impact because it seems to have no cause may be reduced by superimposing some kind of explanation on the real world. This explanation can vary from the threat of world destruction to persecution at the hands of some sadistic agent of the Gestapo.

The second primary defense is essentially the same process turned inward. Memories of threat or impulses within a person that are believed to be bad are eliminated from awareness. That which might, if actually experienced, provoke anxiety or some other disturbing emotion is repressed so that it never becomes conscious at all. This mechanism has been reproduced experimentally in an interesting way (34). Students were placed in a complex apparatus with some similarity to an electric chair. They were then read a list of words and asked to say whatever came to mind in response to each word. In conjunction with one of these words, *barn,* they received an electric shock. *Barn,* with its concomitant shock, appeared several times in the list. The next day the students returned for what they thought was a similar session and were asked to recall the words in the list. They characteristically recalled words which had no connection with *barn*—those which had neither preceded nor followed it and those which had no possible rural connotations. Thus, they eliminated from memory the answers which might have had any relation to the unpleasant shock. Once removed from the apparatus and convinced that they were safe from further threat, however, the students had no difficulty in remembering the words. The repressed answers reemerged under these more benign conditions.

These two basic defenses will be referred to many times in later discussions. One or the other appears to operate in conjunction with nearly every symptom, and for this reason both are major contributors to performance failure. At this point, however, the discussion will move to another question: What are the factors leading to the development of symptoms and emotional breakdowns? What aspects of an individual and his environment coalesce to produce such severe and inflexible symptoms that the ongoing process of life is disrupted?

One determinant is the number of situations which arouse fear or anxiety or other severely disturbing emotions—the number of situations which are seen as directly threatening or which stir up potentially disturbing thoughts and impulses within the individual. It is evident that different people tend to be emotionally reactive to different kinds of situations. Just how these specific sensitivities are developed has not been definitely established, but the fact of their existence is clear. The greater the number of such personally stressful situations, the more likely it is that a person will be exposed at some point to a potentially disturbing environment. The range of these specific sensitivities within an individual may be very limited, as is presumably the case in most people we would consider truly emotionally stable. But it may also be very large, to the point where anxiety is an almost constant concomitant of waking experience in practically every environmental milieu.

Given the number of stressful situations that exist, a second factor is the frequency or duration of actual exposure—or the number of times a person feels that exposure is imminent. Of course, if an individual can avoid that which is disturbing without seriously disrupting the course of his life, he may minimize the probability of emotional breakdown. Or it may be that in the normal course of events he does not have to expose himself to his particular problem situations for any sizable period of time. A person may be excessively sensitive to hospitals with their aura of sickness, injury, and death. Consequently he may, with full knowledge of these feelings, decide at an early age that a career in medicine is not for him. Or he may have been offered so many inducements to enter the business world that alternative courses, such as a career in medicine with its potential for emotional disorder, may never have been a matter of concern at all. In instances such as these, failure to enter a hospital could not be taken as indicative of emotional illness. However, if he should require hospitalization for a physical illness and continually either refuse treatment or otherwise defend against being exposed to the hospital environment, his adjustment could not be considered satisfactory. The same would be true if he were to enter the hospital and subsequently develop symptoms which interfered with the normal processes of treatment and cure.

Another factor is the intensity of the emotional experience aroused by the situation. If the intensity is minimal, then frequent exposure for long periods may not actually be debilitating. On the other hand, a single extremely intense emotional experience, such as the death of a loved one or some act of unaccustomed personal violence, may be sufficient to set off a lengthy period of illness. The factor of intensity must, however, be evaluated in conjunction with the individual's capacity to withstand unpleasant emotion. Some people can handle considerable anxiety without resorting to defensive maneuver or allowing the emotion to disrupt normal behavior. Others seem to be affected almost immediately and react in drastic ways to the slightest tinge of fear. What produces these differences we do not know.

A Classification of Emotional Disorders

No effort will be made to provide the reader with an extensive review of current thinking on the various types of emotional illness. For one reason, there is no such thing as a consensus in this area. Furthermore, the complex classification systems that have been developed are intended to serve clinical purposes and can contribute little to the manager's understanding of ineffective performance. Those who wish a more detailed presentation of the approaches developed in clinical psychology and psychiatry will find it in appropriate textbooks (41, 49) and in the official American Psychiatric Association publication on the subject (30).

The most important distinction for our purposes is that between the psychoses and neuroses, because the two affect performance differently and are responsive to different types of treatment. In one sense this is a matter of severity. In psychosis, the person is so bound up in his emotions and the process of defending against them that responsiveness to the demands of the outside world becomes minimal or is totally lost. Emotion is experienced with overpowering intensity, and equally drastic defensive processes are mobilized. These defenses characteristically manifest themselves through behavior (or speech) or through perceptions and beliefs. That is, although physical symptoms precipitated by emotion may exist in psychosis, they are not sufficient alone to define the disorder. Distorted ideas or perceptions are, however, always present, and the degree of commitment to them is likely to be strong. Interpretations which are inconsistent with reality are not regarded by the person simply as possibilities. They are beliefs, held with absolute conviction. The individual moves to a state of certainty without any attempt to check on the validity of what were mere hypotheses only moments before. The defenses become totally inflexible. As a result, these distorted thoughts and perceptions may on occasion manifest themselves in very bizarre behavior and speech.

It is this loss of contact with the realities of the world outside the person which distinguishes psychosis from neurosis. In neurosis, a term which we will use to cover all remaining emotional disorders, this break with reality does not occur; the individual does not lose himself entirely to the processes of emotion and defense. Instead, he adopts methods for warding off emotion which are generally consistent with the demands of social convention and the need for survival. This conception of the factors distinguishing psychosis and neurosis receives support from a study of the personality characteristics of over four hundred patients under treatment for psychosis in a number of hospitals throughout the United States and of over two hundred under treatment for neurosis (54). Two features appeared with unusual frequency in all the various types of psychotic groups studied, but rarely in any of the neurotic groups: a marked tendency to perceptual deviance and distortion, which seemed to derive from an excessive use of denial as a defense against anxiety; and a preoccupation with the matter of personal physical harm, to the point where fears of bodily mutilation and disease could be presumed to reach an extremely high intensity.

In addition to their classification as neuroses or psychoses, emotional disorders may be differentiated by their predominant emotion or emotions. Intense anxiety or fear is probably most frequent. Depression (often combined with guilt) is somewhat less common. Instances where anger or extreme excitement predominates are relatively infrequent, although they do occur. In some cases there is a shift from one predominant emotion to another as the disorder progresses.

This dual classification of emotional disorders in terms of neurosis and psychosis, with their different orientations to reality, and in terms of characteristic emotions is perhaps best illustrated by concrete examples. In addition, examples will serve to demonstrate how the various symptom types—emotional, physical, behavioral, and intellectual—actually appear in context. The cases which follow are from the book *Breakdown and Recovery*.

> P.W.A. was a member of a socially prominent family residing in an Eastern city. His father was a successful lawyer and both sons studied for the bar. P.W.A. attended local schools and graduated from a college near his home. Although not an outstanding student he did well and was active in social affairs; he was a member of the golf team as well as a frequent speaker at student gatherings. After completing college in 1942 he entered law school while working part-time in his father's office. During this period, as before, he was frequently in conflict with his father. The latter was prone to occasional alcoholic bouts and on several occasions the son had to go out and "round up" his father. Other than this, the family life seems to have been normal and P.W.A. gave no evidence of emotional disturbance.

In the summer of 1942, however, he had a disturbing experience in connection with some Civil Aeronautics Authority pilot training. Prior to graduation from college he became interested in flying and attempted to enlist in the Naval Air Corps. Rejected for physical defects, he was later accepted as a member of the Army Air Corps Reserve with the provision that he would be called to active duty for pilot training as soon as needed. Wishing to get some prior experience, he entered the Civilian Aeronautics Authority Training Program during the summer. From the beginning of the course he was a complete failure as an aviator; he lacked coordination but this was attributed to the fact that he was frightened all the time he was in the air. After about eighteen hours of flying it was quite apparent that he would "wash out." Before this happened, however, he himself decided he would never make a flyer and resigned from the program. At this time he was emotionally disturbed, realizing he was terribly afraid of flying, but at the same time not wishing to admit his failure.

Several months later he became an Air Cadet. Wishing to try once more to overcome his fear and thus convince himself and others that he was not a "sissy," he did not mention his prior failure. Air Corps selection procedures at that time did not include techniques that would reveal a fear of flying. He found even the initial instruction difficult and was rather relieved when after three weeks he entered the hospital with pneumonia. During the next two weeks he improved rapidly and was apparently emotionally normal, although he talked almost incessantly about an affair with a girl at home. A convalescent furlough followed during which he became increasingly nervous. His parents were especially concerned because his apathy and listlessness were in marked contrast to his earlier ways. As the time for his return to flight training approached, he worried almost continually. Driving back to camp with his parents, he became upset every time he heard a plane fly overhead. His behavior in the squadron orderly room when he checked in was so peculiar that he was sent back to the hospital.

For the next five months P.W.A. remained in the hospital suffering from an acute psychosis. He talked to himself, wandered about aimlessly, smiled inappropriately and was careless about his appearance. He also wrote on the walls. At times he rolled his eyes up in his head and leaned back against the wall while staring at the ceiling. Later he explained that he had been listening to voices. At other times he would sit quietly and write the names of the states over and over again. His speech was disorganized. "Well, I think President Roosevelt was about right. I suppose you might say I was yellow. I can't figure just how I landed here. There are better men than I dying around here

> now." Again, for no apparent reason at all, "I would not want to disturb an old barracks roommate of mine on his career in aviation." The feeling of antagonism toward his father was especially evident in his discussions of "homopatricide." Once he seemed to think he had killed his father, but later denied it. When brought before a medical board for discharge, he was obviously psychotic and a transfer to a civilian mental hospital was recommended. However, his parents finally obtained permission to take him home.
>
> For a little over a year he remained at home doing very little. Gradually his thoughts of flying and glory and crashes and death began to recede. By mid-1944 the world of aviation had become a thing of the distant past and he was able to take up his career again. Entering law school he worked hard and within two years had passed the bar examinations. Later he worked as a law clerk and by 1954 was an assistant district attorney of his county. He married in 1949, but to date has had no children. He is now doing very well and has an income exceeding $10,000 a year (38, pp. 91–93).

P.W.A. suffered from anxiety attacks which were apparently precipitated by flying or the expectation of flying. Finally, faced with the prospect of extensive flight training and no longer protected by the presence of a physical disease, pneumonia, he broke down completely. At this point he developed symptoms involving bizarre behavior, confused thought, and auditory hallucinations, which manifest the break with the demands of reality characteristic among psychotics. P.W.A.'s case may be described as a severe psychosis, luckily of relatively short duration, with anxiety as the predominant emotion.

> A.P.T. was the eighth of nine children and was born in this country to parents of Italian origin. Brought up in a Northeastern city, he attended schools there and did satisfactory work until he reached the third grade. At that time his father, a shoemaker, suffered a stroke which partially incapacitated him, and A.P.T.'s work then became so poor that he had to repeat a grade. He left school at the age of seventeen after completing his junior year of high school.
>
> Except for his early difficulties his marks were good and he had many friends among his classmates. While in school and for a year afterwards he worked as a clerk in his brother-in-law's grocery store and received some training as a butcher. Later after being turned down for enlistment in both the Navy and Marines he took a better paying job at a shipyard. In late 1942 he was drafted at the age of twenty.

Private T. received his basic training in the Medical Corps at a camp in the South. Although his initial duty was as a litter bearer, he was soon shifted to the kitchen where he worked as a cook's helper. In all, he spent nearly two years in this country before being sent overseas with an army headquarters to the South Pacific. Arriving in New Guinea he was rapidly promoted to the rank of technician fourth grade in early February 1945. In early July, shortly after the headquarters was shifted to the Philippines, the soldier received word that his father, whose health had become increasingly worse over the last few years, had suffered another stroke and was completely bed-ridden. There was some question as to whether he would live very long.

A.P.T. became rather depressed over this news and ate very little with the result that he lost almost twenty pounds in a few weeks. His energy seemed to evaporate and he was often nauseated. In late July he went on sick call and after being treated in his quarters for several days was hospitalized. Although seen by a psychiatrist he was not considered to be severely emotionally disturbed, but when he was about to be returned to duty in early September he was discovered one morning hanging from a rafter with a tent rope around his neck. Cut down immediately, he survived his suicide attempt although with rather severe neck injuries. Following this episode he was returned to the States in a markedly depressed state. With electroshock treatment he improved somewhat and was discharged just before Christmas 1945.

Back at home he remained depressed and anxious and was unable to work at all for over a year. Finally, he returned to his former job at the grocery, but became so excited and upset during rush hours that he had to quit after a few months. Again, he was unable to work for a period of time. In the summer of 1947 he took a job with a soft-drink manufacturing company as a laborer, but again had to stop work because he was too nervous.

In early 1948 he entered on-the-job training under the Veterans Administration as a meat cutter with a chain grocery store. He completed his training there in late 1950 and was hired as a regular employee in the meat department. He was married in mid-1949 and shortly after that began to attend courses in meat cutting at a trade school to supplement the training he was getting at the store.

Although A.P.T.'s work was considered satisfactory by his employer, this was primarily the result, at least initially, of his great popularity with the store's clients. Friendly and always helpful, he rapidly accumulated a group of personal customers who al-

> ways asked for him when they came in to buy meat. Because of this his employer made only limited demands of him and permitted him to take time off whenever he became upset. Often when this happened the veteran would go to the back of the store and spend two or three hours by himself before returning to serve customers. On other occasions he was too depressed and disturbed to work at all and as a result was away from work for six or seven weeks out of the year.
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> He considered himself somehow inferior to others and tended to avoid social activities. These feelings of inferiority became almost overwhelming at times and it was then that he would remain home for periods of time until he was able to bring his emotional upset under control. But his employer was extremely sympathetic and, realizing, in addition, the value of his popularity with the customers, made every effort to adjust the job to A.P.T.'s emotional state. Gradually, his periods of depression became less frequent and the veteran began to perform more effectively. At times he actually enjoyed his work although as of 1951 he still had to spend a good deal of time alone in the back of the store attempting to get his emotions under control (38, pp. 188–190).

A.P.T. exhibits many of the symptoms that are characteristic whenever depression is the predominant emotion—inability to eat, with a resultant severe loss of weight; intense conviction of inferiority; arousal of the depressed condition by the death or severe illness of a family member; attempted suicide. The condition appears to have reached the proportions of a psychosis during the Army hospitalization and apparently remained at that level of severity for some time after discharge. Later it subsided somewhat, and during the period of employment as a butcher A.P.T.'s emotional problems are probably more appropriately considered indicative of a neurosis.

> B.I.H., the oldest of seven children, was brought up in a large Midwestern city. His education was marked by almost constant difficulties largely because of his lack of interest in school work. He finally left school at the age of twenty when he completed the freshman year of high school, having to repeat several grades. There were numerous occasions when he was almost expelled from school. Sometimes it was because of truancy, as it was when he ran away from home for a week after an argument with his father when he was sixteen. Sometimes he got in trouble over fighting. His worst difficulties came when he was caught having sexual relations with a girl in the school cloakroom at the age of thirteen and when he was caught participating in sexual activities with several other boys in the washroom. But somehow he stayed in school.

At the age of twelve B.I.H. began to experience a great deal of anxiety coupled with almost constant sexual preoccupation. When riding in the car he worried that the brakes might fail and everyone would be killed. He was caught masturbating several times by his father, who beat him severely. Although very upset over this he continued to masturbate several times a day. His sexual activities with women were frequent and often perverted. He had incestuous relations with two of his sisters until they were married. Although frequently worried about this constant sexual preoccupation, he was never able to control himself. At fifteen B.I.H. was fired from a job selling fruit from door to door after he withheld money from his employer. A job in a market was terminated after two days when he propositioned a woman customer. Later he worked in a machine shop, but was dismissed after breaking the machine. He was also fired after three months from a position in a paint shop. When drafted for military service he was employed as a stockroom worker in an aircraft plant.

As a soldier Private H. performed quite well from his induction in late 1942 until the time he broke down in early 1945. He served for a year in the United States working as a laborer at various air bases in the Northeast. Shipped to England, he continued at the same type of work until February of 1945 when he was transferred to an infantry replacement depot preparatory to assignment as a combat rifleman. At this time his fears began to mount. He had dizzy spells and pain around his heart. He was afraid he would be killed in combat. Later he talked of his conviction that the sun was coming closer to the earth and would burn everyone to death. At other times he was afraid the ocean would sweep over the land and drown many people including himself. He claimed the other men picked on him and, once in the hospital, would sit for hours describing his lurid sexual behavior, dwelling on the details. He would end up by saying: "I'm bad clear through. I wonder what you must think of me." He was returned to the States and discharged in June.

B.I.H. returned to live with his parents and after about a month obtained a very good job in the molding department of a rubber manufacturing company. He was paid at a base rate of $1.80 an hour—much more than he had ever made before. The work, however, was too demanding for him. The noise bothered him and he became panicky on the rare occasion when he was producing at a high enough rate to earn a bonus. He lost a good deal of time from the job only because he could not bring himself to go to the factory and face all the noise and confusion. When he was working he was so nervous he could hardly stay on the job. He was very worried about how he would support himself since he felt sure that he would soon either lose his job or be seriously

> injured. He was still sure the sun was too close to the earth and expected that at any moment he might catch fire and burn to death.
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> As time went by his state became quite obvious to his foreman, who was afraid that B.I.H. would collapse completely if he remained in the mold department. In addition his production was so poor that it was not feasible to pay him at his former rate. In fact the choice was between firing him outright and giving him a trial at a lower level job. The company chose the latter course largely because he was a disabled veteran, and finally, he was shifted to another position at the same factory which the company considered less stressful. As a laborer assigned to loading tires he was able to work in a noise free area under much less pressure. His pay was changed to a day rate basis and, after a period of what amounted to probation in this position, the decision was made to retain him.
>
> B.I.H. has continued to work as a laborer at the same factory. His fears have largely disappeared and although his work is not considered very good, it is at least satisfactory. He is absent from the job rather frequently, but the company does not feel that this is an adequate basis for firing him. For the first time in his life he has been able to hold a job over a sizable period of time and perform in an acceptable manner. He continues to live at home, although his mother died in 1950. At the time of his last examination for pension purposes, the V.A. doctors considered the veteran almost completely recovered and noted that in actual fact he was doing much better than he had before military service (38, pp. 190–192).

B.I.H. appears to have been experiencing severe anxiety since his early teens. During his military service he also developed physical symptoms which were clearly related to his emotional state. In general the case description suggests a long-term neurosis. However, at times, when he faced the prospect of combat and when employed in the molding department of the rubber company, his anxiety level apparently mounted to the point where thinking became severely deluded and distorted. His convictions regarding the relationship of the sun and the earth suggest strongly that, for periods of time at least, he did become psychotic.

Emotions and Performance

From what has already been said it will be apparent that emotions and emotional disturbances may or may not affect job performance. The effects vary with the emotions aroused, their severity, the type of defenses employed, and the specific nature of the work situation. Without question, some people perform *more* effectively in certain jobs as a result of their emotional problems. They may, for instance, be driven to an intense concentration on work in an effort to ward off anxiety and guilt. This process will be discussed at length in the next chapter. Under many circumstances, however, anxiety, depression, anger, and other emotions are strategic for performance failure. Similarly, the various techniques adopted to defend against disturbing emotions frequently serve to decrease effectiveness.

Research on anxiety has revealed a number of ways in which it may affect performance (31). Visual perception is likely to be disturbed, with a resulting increase in errors on tasks such as those performed in most clerical occupations, inspection jobs, and the like. This reduced perceptual efficiency is also reflected in a general reduction in speed. There is likely to be difficulty in learning new things. The anxious employee characteristically needs a much longer period of training when introduced to unfamiliar job duties, and even then learning may be incomplete. Skill is decreased in tasks requiring dexterity and muscular coordination. Intellectual processes are also affected: Memory is poorer; reasoning and problem solving tend to suffer. Apparently the person experiencing severe anxiety finds it so difficult to concentrate on other matters that job demands are not fulfilled. He cannot devote his attention and energies to his work.

Depression and guilt characteristically have performance effects similar to anxiety. In addition, the depressed person is likely to slow up markedly with a resulting decrease in the quantity of work output. There may also be a pervasive sense of inadequacy with a great deal of self-deprecation and an almost total loss of confidence. As a result, decisions may be inordinately delayed and the capacity for independent action without constant prodding may be at a minimum. Where guilt predominates, glaring errors may be made with a view to *provoking* criticism. The man actually brings punishment down on himself in order to allay his emotion, although he is unlikely to be aware of what he is doing.

Anger may have an impact on performance which differs somewhat from that of the other emotions. For one thing, the direct and appropriate expression of anger and hatred is not common in people suffering from an emotional illness. When anger is found in emotional disorders, expression is often delayed to the point where it is very difficult to determine what the original precipitating event was. Either that, or the anger is clearly intertwined with anxiety and emerges as petulance, sulkiness, negativism, or a constant irritability and moodiness. If negativism predominates, the quality and quantity of the man's work may be impaired because of what amounts to a refusal to do what management wants. More frequently, chronic anger results in performance failure due to a negative impact on the work of others. The man appears to be a troublemaker, always stirring up his fellow employees and interfering with their work. Such general antagonism may also manifest itself in breakage, theft, or other behavior which has a direct detrimental effect on profitability. This should not, however, be taken to mean that anger and resentment cannot, on occasion, have a direct effect on the quality and quantity of the man's own work. There is definite evidence that such direct effects do occur (52).

The avenues through which many of the symptoms previously described may influence performance need little explanation. A number of these symptoms involve excessive reliance on defensive processes which clearly preclude any productive work. This is particularly true where a psychosis is involved. In addition, severe physical symptoms may well contribute to excessive absenteeism, and a resort to various techniques of avoiding disturbing situations may result in a failure to perform important job duties or to appear for work at all.

The role of intellective defenses in performance may be less obvious. Certain kinds of managerial decision making, for instance, can be severely hampered by emotional problems whose existence is not apparent. It is always difficult for an individual to determine exactly what people think of him and thus whether his feelings of inadequacy have any justification in the opinions of others. Faced with this ambiguity on such an important issue, he tends to fill the gaps in his knowledge with hypotheses which may be based on minimal information (33). Should a manager begin to develop intense feelings of inferiority and guilt, his job makes it particularly easy for him to ward them off by a process of selectively perceiving the world around him—by utilizing certain sources of information and not others. He may thus defend against his feelings of guilt by forming a conviction that he is really an outstanding businessman with tremendous capabilities.

A manager is in an ideal position to do this because he can base his hypotheses regarding himself entirely on the statements of his subordinates. The nature of company organization makes employees dependent on those above them for salary increases, promotion, even continued employment. As a result comments by subordinates about their immediate superiors, insofar as they reach the superior's ears, are likely to be uniformly favorable irrespective of actual performance. A manager can then reject, as purely a matter of company politics or sour grapes, any less favorable comments made by other managers at an equal or higher level. On occasion the denial may be total—the manager may completely fail to hear criticism or refuse to listen to it.

As a result of this process of selecting the evidence, the manager replaces feelings of guilt and inferiority by first a hypothesis, then a conviction of what may border on omniscience. He is sure he has a special skill, a superior business acumen. He becomes certain of his marked superiority to others, and as a consequence he makes less and less effort to base his business decisions on a substantial underpinning of fact. Each decision becomes a testament to his personal and unique ability. He does not need to collect and evaluate information in order to arrive at a conclusion; he knows. There can be little question that when the defensive process attains such proportions, actual job performance suffers drastically. If the man is at a high level, the impact on company profits because of unwise decisions may be considerable.

This is one way in which intellective defenses that have reached the proportions of symptoms may contribute to performance failure. The case is not atypical. In fact, it appears that symptoms of emotional illness are particularly likely to interfere with work when the individual is employed in a higher-level position. Jobs requiring only limited skill are much less vulnerable to emotional disruption. In one series of studies (45) among semiskilled production workers in a British factory, no relationship between psychiatric ratings of emotional health and job-performance indexes was found at all. Workers who had a number of symptoms were no less effective than those who were symptom-free. On the other hand, a study of two groups of skilled workers (51) yielded definite evidence that many of those who were considered ineffective were hampered by severe anxiety, depression, and feelings of inadequacy. Others failed because of a constant rebelliousness and belligerence which made them chronic supervisory problems. These men were unable to cooperate with others in the work group because they either did not or could not adequately control the expression of anger and jealousy. Research conducted among factory supervisors has produced similar results (53): Indexes of emotional illness predominated among those who were unsuccessful.

A follow-up of men discharged from the Army during World War II because of incapacitating emotional illness provides further evidence (48). Employment status approximately ten years after separation from military service was determined for a group of men who had been diagnosed as psychotic and for a group diagnosed as neurotic. Included in the study was a comparable group which had not experienced emotional disturbances while in service and which had been discharged at the end of the war during demobilization. Among those who had formerly suffered from psychoses and who were employed at the time of the follow-up, the level of jobs held was comparable to that among the men who had not experienced an emotional breakdown. There was no evidence that occupational adjustment had suffered as a result of a severe emotional disturbance initiated during military service. However, almost 50 percent of those who had been prematurely discharged for psychosis were not working at the time of follow-up. This percentage was almost seven times as large as that in the group demobilized at the end of the war. About a third of the unemployed were in mental hospitals; most of the remainder were still severely disturbed emotionally even though not hospitalized. Characteristically, the latter had held a number of low-level jobs interspersed with long periods of unemployment. Apparently, either psychoses clear relatively rapidly to the point where careers may be resumed (the case of the young lawyer, P.W.A., is typical) or they linger and have an almost totally disruptive effect on occupational adjustment. Where symptoms remain of psychotic, or near-psychotic, proportions, performance is likely to be poor irrespective of job level.

Among those who had suffered from a neurosis at the time of discharge, the picture was quite different. Almost all the men were working ten years later. But they were much more likely to be in unskilled positions than were the men who had not been separated from the Army for emotional disorder. And they were less likely to be in skilled and supervisory positions. Presumably, either the neurotic symptoms had remained long enough in a number of cases to interfere with performance in higher-level positions and thus make demotion necessary (as with B.I.H.), or the symptoms had prevented these men from being selected for employment at higher levels in the first place. In any event this evidence, combined with that noted previously, makes a convincing case for the view that neurosis tends to have its greatest impact on work above the semiskilled level.

Some insight into why this may be is provided by a series of studies conducted at plants of the General Electric Company (52). In each instance two groups of employees working on production lines and performing identical tasks were compared. One group was exposed intentionally to a number of frustrating situations over a period of several weeks. As a result the men became angry and dissatisfied. The other group was, insofar as possible, freed from any potential source of frustration. However, the two groups maintained equally effective production records during this initial period. The anger seemed to have had no effect. But this was not the case when subsequently a major changeover in work procedures was introduced. At this point the quality and quantity of the work turned out by the group exposed to constant annoyances deteriorated badly in comparison with that of the group treated well.

Apparently, as long as the job remains automatic and routine, workers can almost "do it in their sleep." Under such circumstances anger has little impact. When, however, concentration and attention are required, such as during and immediately after a period of changeover, anger does interfere and performance is disrupted. Since jobs above the semiskilled level cannot as a rule be performed automatically, emotions and emotional symptoms are more likely to have a detrimental impact on performance. The greater the amount of new learning, thought, and decision making required in a position, the more probable it is that ineffectiveness will be produced by intense emotional experience.

There are also certain kinds of work which are particularly sensitive to disruption by excessive emotion. A sales occupation, for instance, is easily affected if the man feels intense anxiety and guilt (46, 53), particularly if these emotions are often precipitated in the presence of other people. A major factor in the failure of soldiers who perform ineffectively during parachute training is their inability to cope with the intense anxiety that the jump situation may produce. Refusal to jump almost invariably reflects the presence of acute, immobilizing anxiety (31). There are many more instances where specific emotional reactions are strategic for failure in specific types of work. This problem will be taken up again in later chapters.

Correction and Treatment

The role of the manager in instances where emotional illness contributes to performance failure is twofold. The first requirement is that the disorder be recognized as such. The second is that appropriate action be taken. The preceding discussions have dealt at some length with the need for developing a sensitivity to signs of emotional disturbance. This section will turn to the question of managerial action.

It should be evident that managers cannot engage in the treatment of emotional problems. They are neither qualified nor in an appropriate position to do so. They are, however, in a vital position as a link between the individual and the various treatment sources. It is in this area that some of the greatest difficulties arise. There is an aura of shame and condemnation surrounding the idea of psychiatric treatment, to the point where many people often react negatively to any suggestion that they need help with an emotional problem. A recent study (39) indicates that approximately 45 percent of the adults in the United States could be expected to resist the idea of seeking help, and another 25 percent might or might not accept such a recommendation should circumstances make it appropriate. Efforts to get a person into treatment are most likely to succeed when he is experiencing a great deal of anxiety and unhappiness. A person is also more receptive to the idea of treatment when he is fully aware of the impending or actual breakdown and of the existence of symptoms having emotional origins. Physical symptoms which derive from emotional factors are not likely to be included in this category. Where physical symptoms predominate, the individual will generally consider his problems to be medical rather than psychiatric in nature and will strongly resist any protestations to the contrary. Another factor in attitudes toward treatment is educational level. The higher this is, the greater the probability that an emotionally disturbed person will respond favorably to a suggestion that he might benefit from professional help.

In view of the widespread resistance to any idea that problems may be of emotional origin and sufficiently severe to require treatment, the manager would do well to be extremely careful in dealing with situations of this type. Efforts born out of the most humane motives can frequently backfire and drastically increase the manager's difficulties. In general it is probably best not to recommend treatment unless performance has suffered or unless the man himself has introduced the subject of his emotional problems. Should a manager take it upon himself to announce his diagnosis to a subordinate when the man's performance is satisfactory, he will run the risk of arousing considerable resentment not only in that individual but in the group as a whole. And the man's condition may deteriorate as a result.

On the other hand, if work has been severely disrupted, managerial initiative of this kind is entirely appropriate—providing, of course, that there is some possibility of success. There is little to be gained by recommending treatment to an individual who will almost certainly reject such a suggestion and who is not sufficiently disturbed to *require* hospitalization. In such cases, where the probability of resistance is very high, some solution other than professional treatment must be formulated.

One further caution. Although many emotionally disturbed people try to keep their superiors from becoming aware of their problems, this is not always the case. Sometimes a subordinate will want to pour out his or her problems to anyone who will listen, or will specifically seek out a supervisor for this purpose. Under such circumstances it is not easy to turn a cold shoulder. Yet the manager who can bring himself to send such a person to a more appropriate listener may save himself much future trouble. The managerial job involves recognizing the need for help and making every effort to see that help is obtained. Should this role be extended, so that the manager-subordinate relationship becomes similar to a doctor-patient one, the emotionally disturbed individual can well begin to make special demands on his boss which the latter may find hard to resist. Or in refusing to give such special considerations, the manager may provoke resentments which further extend an already difficult situation.

Becoming closely, and perhaps emotionally, involved in a subordinate's problems can have another unfortunate consequence. As the individual pours out his problems, much may be revealed regarding marital difficulties, personal animosities, etc., that he will subsequently regret. Guilt and shame may follow the discussion, and the subordinate may become so disturbed by the thought of what his superior now knows and therefore must think of him, that all personal contact is avoided. At this point the manager himself has become a direct source of anxiety to his subordinate, and the work relationship is inevitably and unnecessarily impaired.

The specific person to whom emotionally disturbed employees should be referred depends on the company and the nature of the work situation. The important thing is that it be someone familiar with treatment resources in the community. This may be a company psychologist or psychiatrist, a physician in the medical division, or someone in the personnel department. In many instances such intermediaries within the organization will not exist, and the manager will have to direct his subordinate to someone outside the company. If a qualified professional specialist—that is, a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist—is not specified at such times, the man will probably turn to a clergyman or a physician without psychiatric training. Although such people may be able to help when the emotional disturbance is relatively mild, they cannot generally provide treatment for disorders of a more severe nature—the kind that are likely to be present when work performance is disrupted. In the case of conditions reaching psychotic proportions, some type of treatment within the confines of a mental hospital is usually required. In any event, whether the disorder constitutes a psychosis or a neurosis, it is important that the individual ultimately be seen by a professionally qualified person. Unless this is done, it is very unlikely that treatment will restore an effective level of performance on anything approaching a permanent basis.

Although the manager himself will not be personally involved in any treatment, it is helpful to know the techniques currently employed in order to form some opinion concerning when effective performance may be expected. Where a psychosis has made continued work performance undesirable or impossible, hospitalization is normal. Treatments vary, but at the present various forms of shock therapy are widely used with psychotics. Insulin-produced convulsions and coma seem to be most effective with severe panic states, and electrically induced convulsions most successful where depression or extreme excitement predominates. Various drugs have also proved to be of considerable value, especially in reducing emotional states to manageable proportions and in making it possible for patients to return at least to their homes and communities, if not always to satisfactory levels of work performance. The drugs have the added advantage that they may permit this release from hospitalization within a relatively short period of time.

Where other techniques have been tried and have failed, various brain operations are sometimes performed. These operations characteristically lower the intensity of emotional experience and thus reduce the probability that continued hospitalization will be required. There is usually, however, some permanent impairment in intellectual functioning, particularly memory, as well as a major change in personality. As a result the patient may not be able to return to employment, and if he does, it may be necessary to restrict him to relatively low-level positions.

Drug and shock therapies characteristically do not have long-term detrimental effects of this kind, and many people who have suffered from severe psychoses have been returned to their jobs within reasonable periods of time. Rapid cures, within three to six months, are particularly likely when the predominant emotion has been either depression or excitement and when electric shock therapy has been employed. The rate of short-term cure in psychoses where anxiety, panic, and belligerence are the major emotions is by no means as satisfactory, especially if there have been prior hospitalizations for emotional disorder.

Although psychotherapy is sometimes employed with psychoses, occasionally with striking success, it is used primarily as a cure for neuroses. In such instances the treatment characteristically requires from one to five hours a week, spent either at the therapist's office or at a clinic. The patient describes his feelings, his thoughts, and his dreams while the therapist attempts to help him gain sufficient understanding of himself to permit more adequate control of his emotions. The length of treatment varies from a few months to five years or more, depending on the severity of symptoms and the degree of personality change envisioned. In most cases psychotherapy will not provide a short-term solution when emotional illness is strategic for performance failure. Personality change under these conditions is likely to be a gradual process. In addition, psychotherapy requires the willing cooperation of the patient. He must want to undergo treatment and solve his problems. Those who resist strongly because they believe they can handle the situation alone, or because they do not really want to change, are not likely to benefit from such treatment even when coerced in some way into attempting it.

In recent years the so-called tranquilizing drugs have also been used extensively in the treatment of neuroses. When these drugs are effective, they tend to produce very rapid improvement. They do frequently reduce the level of anxiety and guilt and thus may well permit continued performance in a person who would otherwise be incapable of a satisfactory work adjustment. Unfortunately, like all the procedures mentioned, they are far from universally effective. In many cases they delay, but do not provide protection against, an eventual breakdown.

Treatment of the psychoses is clearly a psychiatric problem usually requiring hospitalization, but the neuroses are much more prevalent, and in many instances those who suffer from them attempt to continue their employment. Often such people refuse any kind of treatment. Those who do seek help may not benefit over any extended period of time, and the much larger number who are cured are likely to achieve continued freedom from incapacitating symptoms only during the latter stages of a lengthy treatment process. In addition, there are many individuals whose typical emotional reactions interfere with performance in their specific jobs, but who cannot be considered emotionally ill and in need of treatment. An example might be a rather sensitive sales clerk who had a tendency to tell customers what she thought of them.

A possible solution is suggested by studies which have revealed that many of the men discharged from military service during World War II for neuroses were able to readjust rather rapidly (6). About 65 percent achieved a satisfactory permanent adjustment within two years of discharge, in spite of the fact that only a very small number received any type of treatment during this period. Another 15 percent appear to have adjusted eventually, although only after rather long periods of continued or intermittent illness. A crucial factor in this very high rate of cure seems to be that these men were all forced out of the situation and environment in which their disorders had become manifest and were required to seek a new environment where they could continue their badly disrupted lives. They were aided in finding a situation relatively free of stress by families, friends, employers, veterans organizations, the Veterans Administration, and educators, but very rarely by any kind of psychotherapy or psychiatric treatment.

Similar readjustments can be made within an organization if sources of stress can be identified and subsequently removed. Sometimes a job can be changed so that the causes of anxiety are eliminated. Sometimes the man can be shifted to another type of work, another work situation, or another supervisor where his specific sensitivities will not be activated. Frequently, assigning a man more routine tasks where less concentration and decision making are required will permit him to perform effectively in spite of his symptoms. The important thing is to find a situation which will either minimize stress or where symptoms will not interfere. At the same time the man should be induced to begin treatment, if this is appropriate and if it can be accomplished. Often demotion to a less emotionally demanding position is required, although sometimes promotion to a job which carries more status and is less provocative of shame and embarrassment can help. The course taken will have to take account of the nature of symptoms, the type of emotion, and any specific sources of stress that may be present at work.

In many instances, of course, this kind of organizational action will be severely restricted by limitations on the courses that are in fact available. It may well be, especially where symptoms are of a severe nature, that after all possible means of retention have been explored, employment will have to be terminated. Further investment in the man may be unwarranted when the possibilities for future effective performance in an appropriate job are realistically evaluated. Firing may be the only course open when a man actively resists all efforts to find a solution to his problems.

Alcoholism

Alcoholism is given separate consideration in this chapter to focus attention on one of the most persistent managerial problems in industry—and one of the least understood. Although because of drinking on the job, hangovers, and anxiety, alcoholics often turn out insufficient work or work of poor quality, absenteeism is the major source of difficulty. In one company (50) a group of known alcoholics lost 2.5 times as many days from work as a group of nonalcoholics of similar sex, age, length of service, job type, and ethnic background. These absences were not entirely due to drinking per se; the alcoholics had 3.6 times as many accidents. The off-the-job rate was particularly high. On-the-job accidents were excessively frequent up to about the age of forty, but after that, for some reason, there was no evidence of any association between accidents at work and alcoholism.

When combined with the vitamin deficiency which is its almost invariable concomitant (due either to the selection of an inadequate diet or to a failure to eat at all during periods of intoxication), excessive drinking may result in incapacitating physical disorders. Permanent brain injury involving severe memory defect is frequent. In fact, unlike other emotional disorders except for suicidal depressions and a few physical symptoms of emotional origin, alcoholism may well terminate in death. The importance of managerial action in this area is further indicated by the fact that any company may expect to find at least 3 percent of its work force suffering from the disorder.

In view of the frequent uncertainty regarding the kind of behavior that actually establishes a man as alcoholic, it may be helpful to start the discussion with another case history from *Breakdown and Recovery.*

> Little is known of W.G.'s early history other than the fact that he was born and grew up in a large Midwestern city. He went as far as the second year of college, married, and worked for a number of years as an inspector for a candy company. In 1935 during his wife's pregnancy he became quite nervous, but was able to continue with his work. Three years later, however, at the age of twenty-four he began to drink rather heavily. As the drinking continued he had periods of delirium when he trembled all over and was very excited and anxious. Frequently he started drinking in the morning to steady his nerves. He began to stay away from home for periods of time on drinking bouts. Finally,

his wife divorced him for drunkenness and was given custody of their child. At this time W.G. was employed as a government clerk, a job which he lost shortly before induction because of his drinking.

Private G. took his basic training with the Signal Corps in late 1942 and early 1943. Military life, with its new demands and pressures, led the soldier to increased drinking. Toward the end of his three-month training period, he went on his first drinking bout, which lasted four days. As a result, his final weeks at the Signal Corps Replacement Training Center were spent at hard manual labor. Nevertheless, because of his education and intelligence he was assigned to relatively responsible duties as a clerk in a signal supply organization. But the alcoholic pattern continued. In the next four months he was absent without leave twice and spent over a month in the stockade. His imprisonment would have been longer, but his outfit was alerted for overseas shipment and he went with them to the port of embarkation.

While waiting to embark, Private G.'s company went through the usual training exercises. During one of these—an obstacle course—the soldier jumped from a high platform and broke a bone in his foot. He was hospitalized and his company shipped out without him. This was the beginning of a period of almost a year during which he was shifted from one hospital to another. As his foot began to heal, Private G.'s anxiety increased and his need for liquor, which he could not obtain in the hospital, became almost unendurable. He started going AWOL to get a drink. One drink led to another and sometimes he was away from camp for as long as three weeks at a time. In seven months he was absent on five separate occasions for a total of fifty-four days.

Finally, after returning from his last bout in a delirious state he was transferred from the medical to the psychiatric ward where he was kept in confinement for the next several months. The restriction only increased his craving for liquor and on his release he got drunk again. Again he was admitted to the psychiatric section in an alcoholic delirium. At that time the doctor decided that since Private G. had real capabilities and since he wanted to return to duty, he should be given one last chance. Although the soldier signed a pledge to abstain from all liquor, within two weeks he was back on the psychiatric ward in an intoxicated state. At that point the Army decided that nothing further could be done to help the soldier and he was discharged "without honor." At the board proceedings, the soldier said of himself: "I cannot seem to give the cause of the first drink. However, when I drink a little bit I cannot stop for several days. Then I will quit for a period of time, nothing at all, no alcohol. However,

> in the Army, with the seriousness which I think is due to the pressure of Army life which all of us in the service know is prevalent, it is worse."
>
> On returning home, W.G. continued to drink heavily. Nine months after his discharge he was admitted to the V.A. hospital for alcoholism with acute complications. Within twenty-four hours he died of heart disease. W.G. literally drank himself to death within six years. When his widow applied for a pension on behalf of his child, it was denied on the ground that the character of discharge barred payment of death compensation or pension benefits (38, pp. 30–32).

W.G.'s drinking clearly fits the definition of symptomatic behavior in an emotional illness. He employed liquor, as others may employ drugs or gambling or petty theft, in an effort to erase anxiety; he used it as a defense. The symptom became so inflexible that marriage, employment, freedom from imprisonment, promises to stop drinking, and eventually, life itself fell before it. There can be little doubt that the ongoing processes of existence were being disrupted by his symptom long before W.G. entered military service.

Probably the most difficult problem in the management of alcoholism is identification. It is characteristic for employees to cover up for their friends who have been drinking too heavily. Every effort is made to keep management from finding out about such things; often the man's immediate supervisor is also involved in the conspiracy. Many alcoholics are good workers when sober. They are likely to be "nice guys" and a lot of fun. No one wants to expose them to the risk of being fired, and so nothing is done. They continue to work intermittently and at times poorly year after year, until the condition becomes totally incapacitating and continued employment is no longer possible.

A recent study based on extensive questioning of approximately two hundred members of Alcoholics Anonymous provides valuable information that can help in the identification of alcoholism (55). Absences are likely to be frequent and the total amount of time lost considerable. Leaving work during the morning or at the noon hour is particularly common. The absenteeism is generally accompanied by a variety of excuses, some of which are improbable and peculiar. Inconsistencies tend to appear in these stories, and there is frequent mention of colds, flu, stomach upsets, and virus conditions. On the job the red eyes and flushed face of a hangover are often in evidence. So too are hand tremors and the smell of either alcohol or breath cleansers. Work tends to be accomplished in spurts and slumps. There may be occasional temperamental outbursts and an unusual amount of suspiciousness. Also, problems outside work are likely to arise and eventually come to the attention of management—financial difficulties involving loan companies, mortgages, and charge accounts; marital discord, sometimes combined with a request that pay checks be sent directly to the wife; conflicts with neighbors or the police.

Once a man has been identified as alcoholic and there is clear evidence of performance failure, the problem should be discussed with him. On the other hand, if performance is adequate, including the amount of absenteeism, there is little basis for managerial action. The man is unlikely to accept recommendations regarding treatment when no justification for such action can be found in the work record itself. In fact, getting an alcoholic to agree that he has an emotional problem and needs treatment is a difficult process under any circumstances. If possible, the matter should be handled by someone with medical or psychological training within the company. Frequently the most appropriate course is to put the man in touch with the local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous. Many companies have members of AA on the payroll who are contacted when an employee is known to have problems involving alcohol. The organization is generally willing to do anything that can possibly help in such cases, and the rate of cure is relatively high; higher, in fact, than that for psychotherapy with alcoholics.

If all efforts to get the man to obtain help fail and if performance continues to be poor, a probationary period should be instituted with the understanding that a failure to improve will result in the termination of employment. In this connection, if the man contends that he has obtained help with his problem, a check should be made to ensure that treatment is in fact continuing. Emotionally disturbed people are not always entirely truthful about such matters. If the difficulties continue during the period of probation, the man should be fired. This is recommended as the most appropriate action from both a company and a therapeutic viewpoint. The shock of "hitting bottom" in this manner may serve as a motive for treatment. Many alcoholics are very skillful in extracting another chance under such circumstances by promising that they will never take another drink. When these pleas are finally ignored, they will turn to alternative courses of action and may well seek help with a problem they now recognize as more than they can cope with alone. At the time of firing the man should be told that he will be taken back when and if he can demonstrate that alcoholism is no longer likely to interfere with his performance. This is an important incentive to cure in many cases, especially if the man knows of people who have in fact been restored to employment by the company in this manner.

In connection with the management of alcoholism, it is important to differentiate between an occupational cure and a clinical cure. A man may learn to control his drinking sufficiently so that absenteeism is minimal and other aspects of performance satisfactory even though he does not totally overcome the disorder. He may continue to drink heavily off the job, especially on weekends. In such instances it is easy to *assume* that performance is still inadequate without actually carrying out a reevaluation. Yet alcoholism, like other emotional disorders, may well exist without having an impact on the job itself.

A Note on Incidence

It would be desirable to know exactly what proportion of the United States population might be expected to fail on the job as a result of emotional factors, as well as to know the extent to which various types of emotions or emotional manifestations might be involved. However, no information of this kind is available. All that can be done is to provide the reader with some data regarding the incidence of certain kinds of emotional illness. The following discussion is based on statistics derived from the experience of the armed forces during World War II (37), from an interview survey conducted with a cross section of the U.S. adult population (39), and from various intensive studies of specific groups and localities (35, 40).

When rates for neurosis and psychosis are compared, the incidence of neurosis is at least five times that of psychosis. In fact, the more severe psychotic reactions are unlikely to be encountered very often in the business world. Rates for characteristic emotions in psychoses and neuroses show that anxiety or fear is unquestionably predominant in the great majority of emotional disorders, although the manifestations and defenses employed are diverse. In many instances among psychotics as well as neurotics, anxiety is intermixed with guilt, shame, depression, and anger. Depression is the primary emotion in no more than 10 percent of all emotional disorders, and the percentage is approximately the same among psychotics and neurotics. The rates for extreme excitement and anger are well below 10 percent.

Although males are more frequently treated for psychosis in mental hospitals—probably because illness is more likely to be noticed among those who are employed—there is good reason to believe that symptoms of an emotional nature are more prevalent among women. With respect to age groups, the incidence of neuroses and psychoses is known to increase steadily up to the late thirties. After that the picture is less clear. Probably new disorders appear for the first time among those over forty at about the same rate as they do in the late thirties. On the other hand, because many disorders continue over long periods, the total incidence is almost certainly higher in the older groups. Divorced and separated people, as well as those who have been widowed, have considerably higher rates of emotional illness than those who are married. Within the large cities psychoses with anxiety predominating appear to be concentrated among people living in the downtown center-city areas. This pattern is not as pronounced for psychotics of other types. Both psychoses and neuroses are more prevalent among those who have had less education.

In view of the previous discussion regarding the relationship between education and intelligence, one might expect intelligence, too, to be lower in the emotionally disturbed. The available evidence (47) tends to support this conclusion, but with some interesting ramifications. When test scores obtained before breakdown are compared with population figures, both neurotics and psychotics cluster at the lower-score levels. However, when these people are followed up, it becomes clear that it is the severely and chronically disturbed who are of particularly low intelligence. Those who require long-term or repeated hospitalization for their disorder have, as a group, an average intelligence level well below that of the population as a whole. On the other hand, the psychotics and neurotics who do not require long-term treatment are not particularly likely to be intellectually limited.

The lower intelligence of the chronically disturbed, the relative deficiency in educational attainment among neurotics and psychotics, and the evidence that men discharged from military service for neurosis subsequently work in lower-level jobs, all point to the conclusion that emotional disorder is more prevalent in the less highly skilled positions. A recent study of blue-collar workers in thirteen Detroit automobile plants (43) supports this conjecture. Among men in their forties, 56 percent of the skilled workers proved to be in very good emotional health while only 26 percent of those in repetitive semiskilled positions were equally well adjusted. Among men in their twenties, emotional health was even rarer in routine semiskilled work. As has been discussed, performance is less likely to be affected by emotional illness in these relatively low-level positions. Thus the more emotionally disturbed probably tend to concentrate in semiskilled jobs because they are able to maintain a satisfactory level of performance in this work.

4

INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION TO WORK

Owing largely to the impact of ideas developed by Sigmund Freud, it has become common practice in psychology to assume that all human behavior is determined by some causal process—that it has a reason. Out of this assumption has emerged an extensive search for the mainsprings of human motivation. The search is far from completed. There is much of our day-to-day behavior which cannot yet be adequately understood in terms of any theoretical approach, and as much again which appears to be equally well explained by viewpoints which are widely divergent. Nevertheless, a degree of consensus is developing and a storehouse of tested conclusions does exist.

Although research in this area has traditionally been conducted to solve problems of learning in lower animals, human motivation has in recent years increasingly become an object of study. The discussion here will be entirely restricted to studies of humans. The reader who desires a more comprehensive coverage of the field of motivation should carry his reading beyond these pages to some of the recent textbooks (61, 93).

Specifically, this chapter will be concerned with human interests, needs, wishes, impulses, drives, wants, intentions, motives, desires, attitudes, and the like. Much of the research dealing with these topics has been devoted to work performance. As a result, it is no longer necessary to use descriptive concepts such as laziness, lack of pep, inadequate competitive instincts, etc. More meaningful approaches have been developed which permit greater understanding of the specific factors in individual motivation that may be strategic for ineffective performance.

The first part of the chapter will be devoted to a few basic ideas regarding the causation of human behavior. These may subsequently prove helpful in understanding the complex relationship between motivation and job performance. In the process we will mention and attempt to disprove a few widely held misconceptions. The next section will describe the various ways in which motivation may interact with job requirements to produce various levels of performance. Special attention will be devoted in this connection to fear of failure and pleasure in success. Although it would be impossible to mention all the other motives which may condition performance in one job or another, some which most frequently contribute to performance failure will be discussed. We will also cover the effects of attitudes toward work in general and the effects of interests existing in specific areas of work activity. Finally, as in preceding chapters, we will attempt to relate appropriate solutions to specific strategic factors.

Some Aspects of Human Motivation

The tie between this and the previous chapter comes not only from the fact that both deal with aspects of personality, but from the central position in both of the concept of emotion. Human motivation is largely an emotional phenomenon, and human behavior derives almost entirely from the interaction of positive and negative emotional states, including both those anticipated and those actually experienced (58, 76). We act and talk as we do in part because we expect that we will thereby achieve certain events and conditions which will provoke pleasant emotions within us. Such an emotion might be expected as an immediate short-term consequence, as when we say something that we hope will bring praise from a listener. Or it might be tied to a goal which is many years away; a young man, for example, carries out certain activities on the job as he dreams of the day he will be appointed to a vice-presidency. We also attempt to continue those activities which we believe will maintain a feeling of pleasure once such an emotional state has been achieved. ✓

All motivation, however, is not of this positive nature. We also act in response to the anticipation of negative emotional states. We attempt to avoid that which we believe will provoke anxiety or distress, and whenever these unpleasant emotions are unavoidable we act in ways calculated to reduce their duration and intensity. As with the positive process, negative motivation can be either short-term or extended over time. A man may swerve his car when he sees another automobile approaching in the same lane, or he may refuse a promotion into management because of a fear that he might at some point be called upon to do something that would antagonize his subordinates and make him unpopular.

The attempt to avoid negative emotional states is, of course, similar to the defensive process in symptoms of emotional disorder. However, these symptoms are unique within the realm of negative motivation in that they involve only specific kinds of behavior and represent responses to the threat of extremely unpleasant feelings—those extending beyond mere distress to intense anxiety and deep sorrow. Most important of all, they are of an inflexible and overpowering nature. In extreme conditions, the behavior is manifested no matter what the nature of external reality and no matter what other motives may have been activated in the individual. It is this inflexible, disruptive characteristic of symptomatic motivation that is most important in distinguishing it from other types of negative motivation. The individual gives up everything he might otherwise have wanted in order to satisfy the insatiable demands of his symptom.

In everyday life, of course, a variety of anticipated pleasures and distresses interact and conflict to produce each outcome. Frequently, long-term, delayed rewards are in opposition to more immediate satisfactions, and the resultant behavior is motivated by one to the exclusion of the other. Immediate fear of a situation may give way to the anticipation of some future happiness which can be attained only if the situation is faced rather than avoided. Or the pleasure to be gained from spending a sum of money on some luxury item may take precedence over the long-term rewards to be expected from a wise investment.

Each individual has his own hierarchy of motives, his own relatively stable patterns of dominance which determine, at least in a general way, the type of motivation that is likely to win out. Any symptoms of an emotional nature which he may possess are, of course, by their very nature likely to have a position at or near the top of the hierarchy. Other motives, such as the expectation of fear at the prospect of deviant behavior (conformity) and the anticipation of happiness on achieving the symbols of success (ambition), may also predominate. In the ensuing discussions of the relationship between motivation and performance, the more dominant motives will be our primary concern.

Research has not yet revealed how the individual motivational hierarchies are developed. We do not know how to combine various bits of information regarding a person's previous experiences in order to predict which among his motives will predominate, just as we cannot predict who will be able to withstand intense anxiety and who will succumb at the first twinge. But it is clear that these patterns, and the individual motives which are their ingredients, are primarily learned rather than instinctive. They change from time to time, especially during the years of developing maturity, and their are sizable differences between people with similar heredity. Human behavior, therefore, is not adequately explained by any instinct doctrine. Emotions must be attached to specific events, and expectancies must be built up. This is essentially a learning process. To speak of gregarious and competitive and maternal instincts under these circumstances is really meaningless, since an instinct by definition derives directly from inherited processes.

It is also clear that human motivation does not fit any paradigm for rationality. People often behave in ways that seem senseless and unnecessarily detrimental to their interests. Symptoms of an emotional nature are particularly likely to be irrational in this sense. In many areas of life the prospects of immediate satisfaction often serve to overwhelm long-term goals. Much of the response to advertising, for instance, can only be accounted for in terms of emotional reactions of this type. Studies indicate that many people are attracted to advertising material dealing with complex technical subjects (such as chemical ingredients and mechanical processes) *after* they have already made the decision to buy the product. Apparently they need a logical explanation for their behavior and hope that reading the advertisements will provide it (74).

This caution regarding the potential irrationality of human motivation is particularly relevant when it comes to behavior in response to monetary incentives. For purposes of theory construction, economists have developed the concept of economic man—completely informed, infinitely sensitive, entirely rational in his decisions (63). Such a man is assumed to consistently make choices which will maximize expected utility for him. In the management of performance this has often been taken to mean that subordinates will consistently make choices calculated to maximize monetary income and will be motivated in proportion to the expected financial reward. Although the concept of economic man may provide an adequate basis for predicting behavior on many occasions, the model is no more universally valid than the concept employed in our legal system of a reasonable and prudent man. There is a wealth of evidence indicating that people will not always make decisions calculated to maximize financial return (89). Many people who have reached the top salary bracket for their jobs and who have no hope of promotion continue to work just as hard as they did when merit increases were still available to them. Others are apparently unwilling to exert themselves no matter how much money is offered.

Just as much human motivation deviates from rationality, so it is also on occasion inaccessible to consciousness. Many things are said and done from motives which are completely unknown to the person himself. We often act almost automatically with no idea why. Sometimes we feel that we ought not to engage in certain activities but nevertheless experience what amounts to a compulsion to go ahead anyhow. After the fact we may devote considerable time and effort to developing logical explanations for this behavior.

In such cases where it is impossible to gain an awareness of the true motives behind our actions, it is safe to assume that a process of repression has operated to ward off unpleasant emotions. The chain of events appears to be somewhat as follows. Through our experiences in the process of developing to maturity, pleasant emotional reactions become attached to certain acts and events. Anticipations are created and a motive is formed. Many such motives, especially those of a sexual or aggressive nature, may, however, subsequently prove to have negative implications. We learn that certain words and acts are socially taboo, that our motives are unacceptable to others. Giving them expression may result in considerable anxiety and embarrassment. The solution most readily adopted under these circumstances is to eliminate the original motive from consciousness, to repress it so that the anxiety produced by thoughts or behavior associated with it need no longer be experienced.

Over time, this process results in the accumulation of a large number of unconscious motives or impulses, which may break through the barriers we have erected against them and determine our behavior. Yet the motives underlying the behavior remain inaccessible to us. If it were otherwise, we might have to face things in ourselves which we would consider, at the very least, quite unpleasant. As it is, we are able in a sense to have our cake and eat it too. We gain the satisfaction of expressing certain impulses and wishes while at the same time minimizing, at least under optimal circumstances, the anxious feelings which have become associated with them.

Unconscious motives of this kind are often behind a great variety of errors such as slips of the tongue, misreading, slips of the pen, failure to hear correctly, forgetting of names and intentions, mislaying things, breaking objects "accidentally," etc. (65). They are particularly likely to emerge when we are tired or somewhat emotionally upset. Much ineffective performance is caused in this way. It does little good in such cases to ask a man why he lost an important paper or broke an expensive machine or miscalculated a bill being sent to a customer. He will frequently offer a reason, usually one minimizing his own accountability, but it will rarely be the correct one. In actual fact he does not know why; yet his own motives are clearly responsible.

Such errors can easily be produced under hypnosis (64). A man can be told while hypnotized that he detests another individual, but is too courteous a person to give his animosity expression. If the hypnosis is then lifted and all memory of the suggestion removed, the man will almost invariably express his aggression through various errors and slips of the tongue (calling the training director a *paining* director, for instance). If these slips are brought to his attention and their implications noted, the man will express as much consternation as would any of us caught in similar errors. He is clearly not aware that his behavior derives from motives implanted by the hypnotist. In fact, he is quick to deny any aggressive motives at all.

There is reason to believe that unconscious motives also exert considerable influence on the choice of an occupation (85). Many people unconsciously choose work which will provide them with an outlet for repressed impulses. Others take up activities which will help support a conviction that such impulses do not exist. As might be expected, defensive behavior of the latter kind is not likely to be directed by motives of which the individual would want to be aware. In one study, for instance, projective personality tests were administered to a number of young men who devoted much of their time to weight lifting (66). The tests provided rather convincing evidence that for many of the men the weight training and resultant development of physique served to help ward off unconscious feelings of masculine inadequacy and inferiority. These men devoted considerable effort to establishing their maleness, yet they did not appear to be strongly attracted to women and tended to prefer male company. Unconsciously, at least, they believed other people must be very critical of them, and they considered themselves incapable of handling their problems without help from some external source. They needed strength and sought it in the lifting of weights.

Fear of Failure and Pleasure in Success

Although an abstract, skeletal description of the relationship between motivation and performance might seem appropriate here, such an approach has the disadvantage that it lacks the meat of reality. Unfortunately also, abstract discussions tend to stay at that level; they rarely seem to contribute as much as they should to the solution of practical problems. Consequently this section will forego the more orderly approach and delve directly into a specific motive-performance relationship. The role that motives associated with success and failure play in work performance will be the starting point, in part because of the large body of research that has been conducted in this area, in part because this type of motivation is one of the most important.

In a study mentioned in Chapter 1 (70), accountants and engineers employed by nine large concerns in the Pittsburgh area were asked to describe occasions when they had felt exceptionally good and exceptionally bad about their jobs. From an analysis of these stories it was possible to determine what factors most frequently contributed to pleasure at work. Achievement—the successful completion of a job—was by far the most prevalent. Some type of personal recognition or praise came next. The opportunity to carry out interesting, creative, challenging, or varied work was the third. Being permitted to exercise responsibility for one's own work or that of others was fourth, and promotion was fifth. These five were the major sources of satisfaction noted in the stories. Three are clearly criteria of personal success on the job: achievement, recognition, and promotion. The opportunity to carry out interesting rather than routine activities and to exercise responsibility or autonomy may well have similar meaning for a number of people, since higher-level positions usually possess these characteristics to a greater degree. In any event these men were clearly saying that the attainment of success in one form or another was the major source of pleasure that they saw as available in the work situation.

The primary sources of *dissatisfaction,* on the other hand, were not personal but external. The stories involved instances where the man had been a victim of inadequate company organization and management, where he had suffered as a result of malevolent personnel policies, or where he had been exposed to incompetent supervision. Although the elimination of these external deficiencies in organizational and managerial action would, no doubt, have reduced the amount of unhappiness associated with the events described, one cannot help wondering whether a number of personal failures were not also involved. Could it be that many of these men were describing occasions when they came very close to experiencing a sense of failure and when they were able to avoid the resultant anxiety only by shifting the blame to another source? The study does not tell us. The results are certainly consistent with the view that failure is a major source of fear and distress in the world of work. Rarely does a man admit that he feels bad because of his own incompetent job performance: This usually happens only when he is somewhat depressed and overcome with guilt. Much more frequently, part of the blame, at least, is placed on someone or something else.

Additional evidence for the primacy of fear of failure and pleasure in success as motivating forces in the business world derives from an unlikely source, a survey devised to determine what types of articles published in a company magazine were most widely read (83). The major finding of the study, which was carried out in the Atlantic Refining Company, was that articles dealing with the company's economic position, organization, products, equipment, methods, services, and advantages as a place of employment were much more widely read than those having little to do with the operation of the firm. A closer look at these company-oriented articles reveals an interesting fact. Some of these widely read items deal with personal success (list of promotions). Others describe the success of the company (an article about some new products and the increase in sales they produced). Still others refer to company programs and procedures designed to protect employees against the experience of personal failure (an item on the stability of the company retirement system and another listing service anniversaries for a sizable number of employees who had been with the company for many years). In contrast, readership was relatively low for articles unrelated to occupational or economic success and failure (a list of recipes, an article on stamp collecting, etc.). It appears that the motivating effects of success and failure are not restricted to engineers and accountants. They are spread throughout the organization. Ninety percent of the Atlantic Refining Company employees, for instance, read about such things as promotions.

Ambition—the anticipation of a pleasurable emotional experience associated with the attainment of some criterion of success—is without question a major source of motivation at work. It is likely to contribute to effective work performance as long as events serve to reinforce a man's expectation of achievement. That is, it benefits performance as long as some degree of success is experienced. Several studies indicate that objectively successful people in business are, in fact, characterized by a greater amount of ambition (75). Successful managers selected for the Middle Management Program at the Harvard Business School and for the Sloane Fellow Program at M.I.T. scored well above a cross section of American college graduates on measures of ambition. A group of Turkish business leaders had an average score considerably above junior managers in that country. Within groups of Polish and Italian business managers, those with higher-level, more responsible positions gave evidence of greater ambition. As some might expect, ambition is more likely to be at high levels among sales and marketing managers than in other managerial groups.

However, where the individual's level of ability, or the nature of the job or the organization, or the actions of superiors serve to remove the possibility of experiencing success, ambition is not likely to contribute to effective performance. In fact, under these circumstances where challenge is lacking or ambition frustrated, anticipation of pleasure in success can only be a detriment and may contribute to failure. It may also result in the individual deciding very quickly to seek employment elsewhere. An analysis of turnover figures in one company revealed that men hired with a graduate degree (masters or doctoral) rarely remained for more than a few years.

Another study involved over twenty-five hundred skilled female workers in company locations distributed throughout the United States (87). They were given a special questionnaire which sought to determine what motives—what sources of anticipated happiness—were most frequently frustrated on the job. Four months later these people were followed up and the questionnaires of those who had resigned in the interval compared with those of the women who were still employed. The former group was found to contain a disproportionate number who were dissatisfied about the recognition given them for the quality of their work, about the extent to which they felt their jobs were important, about the degree of autonomy and freedom to work on their own, and about the fairness of the standards used to judge their work. In other words, those who had separated were largely people who had not been experiencing a sufficient feeling of success in their jobs. To what extent this resulted from their own behavior, the actions of their supervisors, or the nature of the work, we do not know.

Turnover is not the only way in which frustration of success may manifest itself. There are many alternative reactions, most of which contribute to ineffective performance in some way. A person may give up his attempts to attain satisfaction of his desires on the job. He may stop exerting himself almost entirely while assuming a "What's the use?" attitude. He may carry out many job duties slowly and in a disinterested manner if at all. Work provides no "kick," and so he does not try. Or on the other hand, strong emotional reactions may be aroused. The man may accuse others of blocking the development of his genius. He may condemn the company. His work will suffer not so much because of inadequate effort as because of the disruptive emotions aroused by the blocking of a strong drive. Under these conditions of frustration the man may become a real troublemaker, exerting a strong negative influence on the performance of others.

Another type of response involves an important concept which has not yet been discussed. We have assumed that people often enter employment with an expectation of attaining certain feelings of happiness which they have associated with their particular concept of success. We have assumed further that they will attempt to attain this success through activities which contribute to effective performance. Unfortunately, this last assumption is totally unwarranted. A man *may* enter a position having already developed techniques for achieving success which are sharply at variance with job requirements. His behavior in pursuit of success and its associated pleasure may, therefore, either conflict directly with work demands or leave insufficient time for effective performance.

For example, a man may engage in "moonlighting" activity outside work which provides him with a real sense of accomplishment, but which leaves him too tired or with insufficient time to perform adequately in his job. Or he may devote his energies to attaining success through "political" activity within the company, spending so much time making friends and influencing people that his actual work suffers. He may bypass merit and promotional increases as a means of accumulating wealth and employ company facilities or his time on the job (perhaps even company cash reserves) in an attempt to gain personal financial success through a more entrepreneurial type of activity. He may even attempt to satisfy his desires through fantasies and daydreams of success, to the point where normal work is severely disrupted. In all these instances integration between the expected means of attaining success and job demands is totally lacking.

Lack of integration between behavior and job may, then, be a response to the frustration of more integrated attempts to attain success. Instead of quitting, losing interest, or reacting with intense emotion when efforts to achieve are persistently denied, a person may seek other channels through which to attain his goals and thus become increasingly ineffective as his behavior departs further and further from that which the job requires.

An additional source of complexity is that the standards which people use to define success are their own. *They* determine what level of accomplishment, what types of reward, will suffice. This is not to say that external standards are devoid of influence. It may be generally understood in a company that a man "on the way up" *should* achieve a certain grade level by a specified age, or that a satisfactory performer in a given job *should* have attained a certain pay rate after being employed for a specific period of time. Standards of this kind are often internalized by individual employees and serve to influence their personal expectations. Nevertheless, people also take their own capacities as they see them into account. Many students are quite satisfied with a C average. Others will settle for nothing but an A. Studies indicate that satisfaction with pay rates is clearly conditioned by the specific individuals whom an employee compares himself with and by how he expects to stand relative to such people (84).

As might be expected, these standards do influence the level of performance. The relationship is nicely demonstrated by some research conducted in a British textile mill (68). Employees were asked to carry out a linking operation, a task having relatively high prestige. At the same time they were asked to make various estimates of the time to complete the task. When these estimates were compared with actual proficiency on the job, it was found that both those who drastically underestimated their own ability and those who set excessively high standards were much poorer workers than those who were more realistic in their expectations.

If an individual defines success in terms of very low standards, he will experience satisfaction at a low level and will have no reason to improve. Such a person may be entirely satisfied with his own work even though he performs at a level sufficiently low to be considered ineffective. On the other hand, a man may set standards so high that he will constantly fail to reach them even though he performs at a satisfactory level by normal standards. His continued personal failures and the resulting disappointment will eventually produce a degree of frustration sufficient to elicit strong emotional responses, loss of interest in work, or unintegrated behavior. At this point performance will begin to fall off and may eventually become ineffective, even though the standards remain unaltered.

As a summary it may be helpful to have a more condensed statement of the relationship between intense ambition and ineffective performance. *First,* a man may begin to perform ineffectively if his job-integrated strivings toward success consistently meet with frustration, and he is therefore continually deprived of what he desires. Under such circumstances it makes no real difference whether his personal standards of success are high or low, although excessively high standards will almost ensure frustration and thus eventual failure.

Second, a man may perform ineffectively if he employs techniques for achieving his concept of success which are not integrated with the requirements of the job. It does not matter whether his standards are high or low or whether he does or does not achieve success in his own terms; his performance is ineffective in any event.

Third, a man may perform ineffectively by external standards even though he uses job-integrated means to success and actually succeeds by his own standards. For if his standards are too low and his performance does not rise above them, he is nevertheless considered ineffective by his superiors. A handicapped worker, for instance, might establish low standards for himself and take pride in the extent to which he had overcome his difficulties, but he might still fall well below acceptable managerial standards.

To turn from the desire for success to the fear of failure, and thus from positive to negative motivation, fear of failure interacts with performance in a manner similar to that of pleasure in success. It has been found frequently among successful managers and executives (69, 91), and there is every reason to believe that it is a major factor contributing to their achievements. In attempting to avoid anxiety associated with events that they consider indicative of failure, they in fact achieve considerable success. For this to happen a man must, of course, avoid failure through the use of job-integrated means, and he must have established very high, although still entirely realistic, standards of failure for himself. In school such a person might, for instance, feel distressed if he were to receive a grade of C. In the business world the possibility that one among some twenty or thirty reports prepared during the year might elicit a mild criticism from his boss would be quite upsetting. As might be expected, such people, although often extremely successful by any external objective criterion, are not likely to experience much happiness. They gain little satisfaction from their work; it is sufficient that they have once again escaped the gaping jaws of calamity.

Ineffective performance can occur in such a man if events should transpire so that he consistently produces work which is below his standards. He is likely to experience intense anxiety or guilt which is in turn disruptive of performance. The actual level of the standards matters little, of course, in instances of this kind. Unsuccessful efforts to avoid failure may also produce reactions other than the strictly emotional. A man may give up, decide to suffer the distress and unpleasantness of failure, and in the end find that things are not as bad as anticipated. Since his expectations regarding the emotional impact of failure are not entirely borne out, his standards slip to a lower level, perhaps disappearing entirely. This is not uncommon among the long-term unemployed. A type of relearning occurs, and failure is accepted as a fact of life.

Ineffective performance can also result when the means chosen to avoid failure are not integrated with job demands. As was the case with ambition, unintegrated behavior may be brought to the employment situation as an established pattern, or the pattern may be created on the job because of the inadequacy of integrated approaches. The possible forms of such a pattern are of course myriad. They include many symptoms of emotional illness. They also include, as one of the commonest patterns of unintegrated behavior, avoidance of the work situation with its aura of criticism and punishment. People who adopt this pattern are likely to be absent frequently and to complain of numerous illnesses or other circumstances which make it inappropriate to hold them to adequate performance standards. Some people will invoke almost any kind of excuse in order to convince themselves and others that standards of work effectiveness are not really applicable to them. Thus since they cannot be evaluated, they cannot fail. Frequently the blame will be shifted to some external event or person. "It's not my fault this thing didn't work out, he (or the company, or my wife, or the market) is to blame. . . ."

Another source of ineffectiveness arising out of a lack of integration between the procedures used to avoid failure and job demands is very common among sales managers (67). Many devote their energies almost entirely to actual selling in spite of the fact that such matters are supposed to be left to their salesmen. As a result, managerial activities are severely neglected. Although behavior of this kind can derive from several types of motivation, many of these people are attempting to avoid failure by doing everything themselves and thus assuring themselves that things are done right. Unfortunately they overestimate their capacities and find out too late, if at all, that they cannot do the work of five or ten other men in addition to their own. This type of behavior is not unlike that of people who have developed techniques for avoiding failure which involve a minute attention to detail and accuracy. Although such perfectionism may represent a thoroughly integrated approach in some jobs, there are other instances where the time consumed in constant rechecking is so great that an adequate amount of work cannot be completed.

It is somewhat discouraging to note further that people whose dominant motive in work is a fear of failure are especially likely to make unrealistic vocational choices (73). They of all people are the most prone to select jobs in which, because of their particular pattern of abilities, they are very likely to fail. Apparently their wish to avoid failure leads many to avoid any kind of vocational guidance or information. This might be considered an unintegrated approach to occupational choice. In any event, the man who fears failure the most is particularly likely to face it.

A final case of ineffective performance is that where a man does actually avoid the experience of failure through job-integrated behavior, but only because his personal standards for failure are very lenient. Such a man will not appear very happy about his work, but neither will he appear particularly anxious. In fact, he may be a rather difficult person to deal with, since he will be convinced of the adequacy of his performance and may consider the demands of his superior excessive.

Other Motives Affecting Performance

Although motives involving success and failure are particularly likely to assume a dominant position on the job, there are many others which may also contribute to ineffective performance. In fact, almost any motive which can be manifested at work may be strategic for failure, either because the means to its attainment are not integrated with job demands or because its satisfaction is blocked. Probably those of a negative nature outnumber the positive. The variety of factors in the work situation which may provoke anxiety, guilt, shame, or some other distressing emotional state is almost infinite. When feelings of this kind are persistently activated, they are very likely to have a detrimental effect on performance unless some more dominant motive serves to counteract them.

A sizable body of evidence indicates that people who are distressed or dissatisfied because of work factors will frequently seek to avoid the sources of their displeasure through absenteeism and job changes (60, 71). Fear of failure is not the only negative motive which has contributed to these findings. In fact, fear of failure is actually much more likely than other types of negative motivation to result in job-integrated behavior. A great many sources of anxiety and distress cannot be avoided through integrated activity but only through some action that interferes with work.

There are, of course, other unintegrated responses in addition to absenteeism and turnover which may appear when disturbing factors at work result in the formation of dominant negative motives. Avoidance may occur within the work situation itself—absence from the workplace, dispensary visits, refusal to perform certain job duties, etc. All of these responses may, if carried to the extreme, have a sizable effect on the amount of work accomplished or on its quality. In a study of factors contributing to performance failure among petroleum company salesmen, one characteristic which appeared frequently was a distaste for interaction with other people (46). On the job these men tended to avoid social contacts whenever possible, and such conversation as they did engage in was likely to be stilted and short-lived. Their shyness made it impossible for them to get close to other people, and as a result sales in their territories suffered. Similar types of avoidance can occur in nearly all jobs.

Positive motives may have equally detrimental effects, and again the possible routes are numerous. In the writer's experience there are, in addition to pleasure in success, four positive motives which are particularly likely to be strategic for performance failure when they have assumed a position of dominance. One of these is pleasure in dominating and controlling other people, a motive frequent among men in managerial positions (78). In all probability it often contributes to the seeking of a career in business management, particularly in line departments, and to successful performance in many such jobs. But a desire to dominate others can also lead to failure. Frustration of the desire may occur, even in line management. Union or subordinate reactions to authoritarian control can, on occasion, block the attainment of such control. People may just refuse to be dominated.

Frustration is most likely to occur, however, when the man with a desire to dominate is in some kind of staff work or in a subordinate position where authority to direct others has not been allocated and where people's acceptance of direction, if the man initiates it on a unilateral basis, is likely to be minimal. The man may then exhibit one of the usual reactions to frustration—emotional outbreaks, loss of interest in work, unintegrated behavior. The last often takes the form of persistent attempts to control the behavior of others in all kinds of situations. The other people become angry because they resent being pushed around, the man devotes most of his time to thinking up ways to get others to do what he wants, and performance suffers all around. Often the attempts to control extend well beyond the workplace itself. Unlike motives involving success and failure, the desire to dominate others may not be satisfiable on an integrated basis within the confines of a particular job. There are many positions which contain neither supervisory responsibilities nor an opportunity to exercise the power inherent in specialized knowledge. The only integrated approach possible in such situations may be for the man to direct his energies toward qualifying for another position in which he can achieve the type of satisfaction he desires.

A second positive motive which may become strategic involves the anticipation of pleasure at being made to feel accepted and liked by other people at work. The man wants above everything else to be popular. Where this desire is frustrated, due either to characteristics of the man himself or to the actions of others, the usual reactions may occur. There are people for whom the whole work environment becomes a meaningless and empty shell if they cannot obtain frequent indications of popularity there. The strategies employed to secure these indications may vary tremendously. Many are entirely integrated: The person carries out certain job duties and in the process achieves a sense of acceptance. This need not be the case, however. Attempts to achieve a feeling of popularity by disruptive, attention-getting behavior are not uncommon. Anything that provokes attention from the group may contribute to a feeling of acceptance. In managerial work an intense wish to be liked by others can result in abdication of responsibility and an inability to issue anything approaching an order to subordinates. The manager's desire for popularity with his men predominates over any wish to fulfill the demands of his job, should the two motives come in conflict. This and related situations will be treated in much greater detail in Chapter 7.

We have discussed the cases of the man who desires to dominate others and of the man who wants to be liked. A third possible motive is social interaction, which may be sought for its own sake. A man may wish above almost anything else to be with others, to talk to them, and to participate in social activities, whether work-related or not. Preference may be primarily for the opposite sex, for the same sex, or for both; for small groups, for large groups, or for a single other person. Activities directed to this goal may be thoroughly integrated with the job: As noted previously, sales work is facilitated by this kind of motivation. Studies also suggest that the average manager spends approximately three-quarters of his time in meetings or other kinds of social interaction and conversation (62). There are jobs, however, where satisfaction of social motives cannot be achieved. For example, a man may have to remain alone for long periods of time if he is to carry out his job duties. Or he may be deprived of the specific kinds of relationships with people that are important to him.

Some people can suffer this kind of deprivation without undue negative results, presumably because other motives outweigh those of a purely social nature. Others are completely unable to perform effectively. Unintegrated responses characteristically take the form of ignoring job demands in order to seek the interaction with other people that is desired. The techniques are many; the experienced manager will be familiar with most of them. A machine operator may spend considerable time wandering around the shop talking to people and neglecting his own work. Or coffee breaks and lunch hours may be extended. Frustration of social motives is a common source of difficulty, especially among female clerical workers. Anyone who directs the work of employees who must spend long periods of time without talking to others should be sensitive to the problem. Mere physical closeness to other people is usually not sufficient to satisfy this kind of motivation. If conversation is not possible, the presence of others may serve only as a source of distraction.

A fourth positive motive, the desire for assistance and attention from superiors, is probably as common a cause of performance failure as any noted in this section. A number of studies indicate that it is a strong motive among managers at all levels (14, 86). They gain a feeling of happiness from being accepted by their superiors, and they enjoy the opportunity to get help with their problems—to go up the line for direction. Such a desire can be fully integrated with job requirements. In attempting to satisfy this motive a manager may become a hard and willing worker. He may form a smooth working relationship with his superiors, perceiving their wishes almost before they are aware of them.

But on occasion, things do not turn out that way. The superiors do not, or cannot, respond to such job-integrated efforts. The man becomes angry and upset, or loses momentum, or turns to unintegrated methods of getting what he wants. These may take many forms. Often he resorts to behavior which leads his boss to consider him a "pest." He constantly demands assistance, instruction, praise, and attention. He takes up so much of the time of those at higher levels that their work, as well as his own, is disrupted. Once he gets into the boss's office, it is almost impossible to get him out. Or he may contrive to get into difficulty in his work or with fellow employees so that supervisory attention is constantly required. He may become something of a show-off, at least when there is any possibility of gaining the attention of his boss. This is not, of course, a problem unique to the ranks of management. People at any level can develop a strong desire to lean on others whom they consider stronger and more powerful than themselves. And when such wishes for assistance and attention exist, a man in any type of position may try to satisfy them in ways which decrease the quantity and quality of his own work as well as that of others.

There are, of course, many more types of positive motives which may contribute to ineffective performance: an interest in solving new and stimulating problems, a wish to engage in phantasy and daydreaming, a need for constant changes of environment, a drive to incessant activity, a desire to take risks, a favorable attitude toward any work which requires only minimal physical activity. All may be frustrated on the job for a variety of reasons and may as a consequence result in emotions and behavior which contribute to failure. All may be satisfied through either integrated or unintegrated behavior, although both possibilities may not exist within the same job.

Work Motivation—General and Specific

Sometimes it is helpful to have a summary statement indicating the net effect of all the various motives which may contribute to a man's work performance. This is what the concept of work motivation provides. Such a concept makes it possible to ignore the specific motives involved and look at the end result only—to designate the general level of motivation contributing to the effectiveness of a man's performance without being concerned about the individual motives themselves. A man is lacking in this work motivation when he has few, if any, positive dominant motives which he believes he can satisfy through work-integrated activity and when in addition the anticipation of fear or some other unpleasant emotion does not lead him into integrated effort. He may, of course, also be considered unmotivated if his standards are so low that little exertion is required to achieve his goal. In such cases the pleasure of success is achieved or distress avoided so easily that it hardly seems to require any motivation at all.

To complete this picture it is necessary to mention the case where a man not only seems totally uninterested in his work, but by his behavior appears actually to desire failure. Such motives do exist, usually on an unconscious level. Any man who deliberately sets out to fail in his work is likely to be considered irresponsible, at best, in our society, and so he usually protects himself from recognizing that he has such a motive by resorting to repression. Nevertheless, school children often fail to do satisfactory work in order to get even with their parents for real or imagined wrongs. And guilt-ridden people deliberately make a mess of their lives in order to punish themselves, sometimes going so far as to confess to crimes they did not commit. In the business world people can attain the satisfaction of strong motives such as this by getting themselves fired or by achieving the status of known failures. Such people are generally grouped with others who are said to be lacking in work motivation, although they might more appropriately be described as taking pleasure in failure. As will be indicated in Chapter 11, there are times when fear of success is not too unusual, either.

The term work motivation has also been employed in a somewhat narrower manner to summarize the effects of the particular motives which contribute to industriousness or perseverance. It is in this sense that the phrase is most widely used by social science researchers. When employed in this way, it does not cover all possible motives that may contribute to effective performance, but only a limited group. For instance, the study of petroleum salesmen (46) indicated that a tendency to seek out and enjoy social interaction with other people was a frequent positive motive contributing to success. But an intense work drive, a willingness to persist in routine work and to put in many hours on the job, was not of equal value in this job. In fact, there was no evidence of any relationship between the degree of industriousness and the effectiveness of performance. In a sense, the successful salesman did exhibit strong work motivation—the kind of motivation, such as the wish to be with other people, which contributed to effective performance when he satisfied it through job-integrated means. When the narrower definition involving only industriousness was applied to him, however, the better salesman cannot be said to have had a high level of work motivation at all.

Yet in other types of work—perhaps in most—industriousness is crucial. For example, a lack of work motivation as it is narrowly defined has been found to be a major cause of performance failure among office tabulating machine operators (81, 82). Presumably the same is true with many other jobs of a similarly routine nature.

Whichever definition of work motivation is employed, it is common practice to distinguish between general and specific types of motivation. Thus the man who is failing because of low motivation in a specific job might or might not react in a similar manner if placed in some other type of work. If he has what is termed *general low work motivation,* then there is no other job he might hold in which he would demonstrate higher motivation. Whether this is the case or not can only be determined from his employment record. If he has had a number of almost identical failures in a variety of different positions, then it is relatively safe to assume that the motivational deficiency is general. This can, of course, never be proved conclusively; there *might* always be some job that would interest him. If, on the other hand, he has had other jobs in which failure attributable to motivational causes did not occur, and these differed in some respect from his present job, then there is reason to believe that the motivational difficulty is specific. This distinction between the general and the specific is important because of its implications for remedial action.

Nevertheless, where the work history is sparse it is very difficult to make this distinction with any feeling of certainty.

Specific work motivation is often identified in terms of areas of interest rather than by reference to individual motives. Thus among 464 men studied in connection with the Atlantic Refining Company's management appraisal program strong specific motivation was found to be present in areas such as computation and working with figures, scientific matters, persuasion and selling, literature and reading, and supervising others. On the other hand, these managers did not show strong positive motivation with regard to outdoor and agricultural work, mechanical activities, and clerical tasks (80).

The same study attempted to determine the average level of motivation in certain specific areas for managers of different types. In particular, men responsible for various research activities were contrasted with the heads of major units other than those engaged in research. Most in this second group were line managers, but some headed large staff groups. The research managers were very much interested in scientific activities, as might be expected. They gave no evidence of particular motivation in the area of selling and persuading and were definitely lacking in any desire to supervise others. The nonresearch managers, on the other hand, were strongly motivated to persuade and supervise others but did not have marked interests in the scientific area. In this same study it was found that while supervisory and persuasive interests tended in general to contribute to managerial success, strong positive motivation with regard to scientific pursuits was characteristically detrimental. As might be expected, therefore, the research men were rated well below the other administrators on the management appraisals. Presumably, since they were more oriented toward scientific matters than managing, they employed unintegrated means in their efforts to gain success. They apparently sought recognition as scientists rather than as managers and thus emphasized one segment of the job to the exclusion of others.

A correlation of this kind between performance effectiveness and the level of work motivation in special areas is more common in positions toward the top of the occupational ladder. Unskilled and semiskilled workers are not as likely to fail in their jobs because they lack the appropriate interest patterns as are skilled, professional, and managerial workers. It seems probable that the major difference between high- and low-level jobs lies in the importance of positive motivation generally. Fear of failure, quite irrespective of the specific kind of work in which it may occur, would seem to be somewhat more important as a motivating factor in jobs at a lower level. At that level many men may have few strong positive motives which they are able to satisfy through their jobs, but they may nevertheless perform adequately because the threat of failure is very real. They may see no prospect of getting into something more enjoyable, and they may be anxious to keep what they have rather than go without any work or move to something similar or worse, with less seniority. At the higher levels more men would be likely to permit their effectiveness to decline upon finding that their dominant motives were being frustrated in a given type of work. Their chances of shifting eventually to something more in line with their interests are considerably better. Fear of failure has much less motivational impact when the man anticipates that he can change relatively easily into something more to his liking.

The importance that specific work motivation can have is neatly illustrated in a study carried out by the Life Insurance Agency Management Association (92). A special booklet describing in detail the actual duties of Life agents and the time normally devoted to various activities was prepared. The booklet was so constituted that it should give a prospective employee a good idea as to whether he could gain satisfaction for his dominant motives while selling insurance. It was distributed to all applicants for jobs in forty-three districts of one company and was not given to applicants in forty-eight other districts. These two groups of districts were very similar in a number of respects. The turnover rates were identical before the study and for all but new hires during the time of the research. In a six-month period 226 agents were hired who had been given the booklet covering what to expect in the job, and 248 were hired who had not been provided with the booklet. At the end of this period, 67 of the latter had already terminated employment—27 percent. Among those to whom the booklet had been distributed, only 43 (19 percent) terminated in the same period. Thus, a reduction in turnover amounting to approximately 30 percent was achieved by permitting prospective applicants who did not have appropriate specific interests in selling insurance to employ extensive and valid information to "select themselves out" without the necessity of actually undergoing frustration of their motives and/or failing on the job before leaving.

Dealing with Motivational Problems

The initial managerial task in carrying out a performance analysis, where it is suspected that a motivational factor may be strategic, is to establish what motives are dominant. This is not always easily accomplished. It can be done by observing a man's behavior and listening to what he says. What does he want? What is he after? These are the crucial questions. Asking him will be of limited value. Some strong motives may be unconscious; others of a kind which are unlikely to be disclosed to a superior. Projective techniques can be of considerable help in establishing the hierarchy of motives, but they require the services of a person with appropriate professional training, usually a psychologist. Where such assistance is available, management can benefit by using it. Readers who are interested in seeing examples of how a projective measure may be employed in studying work-related motivation should consult the book *PAT Interpretation—Scope and Technique* (88). The cases discussed include an industrial chemist who was performing rather poorly as head of a research laboratory, a successful management consultant, an efficient secretary, a small businessman who was doing a mediocre job of running the family business, an outstanding young company president, and an Army private whose prior industrial work history had been very unstable. Besides projective techniques such as the PAT, the various interest measures may also be helpful in determining an individual's motivational hierarchy, although they have the disadvantage that they do not identify specific motives but only the general level of motivation in certain areas.

There has been some tendency to assume that either economic motivation or fear of failure will always be dominant in an employee and thus to handle ineffective performance by offering the opportunity to earn more money or by threatening severe punishment. It would be entirely unrealistic to conclude that these approaches have not achieved a degree of success. But they have failed many times, too. Fear of certain features of the work situation, a desire to dominate, the wish to be popular, strong social needs, dependence on those at higher levels, and many other motives can be more important to a person. Furthermore, the degree to which his behavior is job-integrated and the level at which his standards are set may serve to make financial incentives and the threat of failure relatively valueless. A more differentiated approach to diagnosis and correction is clearly required if a greater number of ineffective performers is to be restored to a satisfactory level.

Actually, it has become increasingly difficult to mobilize a fear of failure and punishment and thus to induce negative motivation and job-integrated avoidance. In Chapter 1 the factors which restrict firing were discussed in detail. Many other limitations on the negative sanctions available to management have been imposed by society during the last century—just as the schoolteacher has lost the right to employ corporal punishment to motivate her students. With the rise in our standard of living, even those threats that can be employed have lost some of their emotional impact and motivational force. This does not mean that negative motivation is disappearing from the industrial scene but only that it is less subject to control by the individual manager. Unions and legal restrictions have increasingly deprived him of some of his more traditional techniques for getting the work out. The result of these developments has been a much greater concern with positive motivation and an intensive, sometimes frantic, search for new techniques. This search is still in process, although progress has been made. The gaps which remain will be clearly evident in the recommendations which follow.

The basic objective is to develop procedures which will induce an ineffective worker to satisfy appropriate motives through job-integrated behavior while employing realistic standards of success and failure. Let us take up the matter of satisfying motives on the job first.

One possibility of inducing a man to satisfy appropriate motives is to so rearrange the hierarchy of motivation that motives suited to the specific job achieve a dominant position. To take a rather extreme but nevertheless instructive example, suppose that a truck driver who works alone is doing poorly in his job because he constantly stops to talk to people and therefore fails to meet his delivery schedules. He is so drawn to others by the anticipation of pleasure in conversation that he fails to do his work. Suppose further that the man's supervisor has succeeded in blocking this unintegrated behavior by assigning him to an after-midnight shift when there is no one around to talk to. This has produced a very bitter and resentful individual who constantly makes mistakes because he cannot keep his mind on his work. Ideally, a man in this kind of job would drive from place to place with practically no social contacts, while actually deriving pleasure from the chance to be alone. The kind of solution under consideration would require that the latter type of motivation be instituted to replace the desire for social interaction in the talkative truck driver's hierarchy of motives.

It seems safe to assume that this sort of thing cannot generally be accomplished by an individual manager. Similar changes are induced by clinical psychologists and psychiatrists in successful long-term psychotherapy. In fact, it is the very nature of such treatment that symptoms are dislodged from their positions of dominance. And when a man is failing because of behavior associated with an emotional disorder, the appropriate solution is, if at all possible, to get him into some type of treatment which will change the dominance relationships among his motives. In most cases, however, the motives and behavior involved are not symptomatic of emotional illness, and such drastic personality changes are not appropriate even when they might be possible. Certain methods of the kind employed in concentration camps during World War II can also apparently produce such changes, but these are fortunately no longer available (59).

The techniques which are available require extensive training of the person employing them, some desire to change on the part of the subordinate, and a great deal of time. Characteristically the business manager has none of these at his disposal. When some motive of an unconscious nature—a wish to fail, for instance—has assumed a position toward the top of the hierarchy of motives, the chances of a manager bringing about any real motivational change himself are at the present time almost nil. Less well-entrenched motives can shift position in an individual's hierarchy, but it is not known exactly how this may be brought about. Studies do indicate, however, that certain kinds of management development efforts can produce this result (79). At present such procedures offer the greatest hope of providing a solution to the problem of motivational change. They are particularly likely to be effective when the group is made up entirely of men whose performance has suffered because of motivational factors and when the major intent of the training is to shift a limited number of motives, perhaps only one, to a dominant position. Accordingly, the group should be as homogeneous in occupation as possible.

An alternative approach involves providing satisfactions for existing motives on the job. If blocks and sources of frustration can be removed through some change of working arrangements, then it may be possible for a man to achieve a satisfactory level of performance without the necessity of attempting a major personality reorganization. In essence this approach involves changing conditions to satisfy important motives rather than changing the motives to jibe with existing conditions. Of course, such a solution will not be possible where the factors restricting the satisfaction of motives are within the individual; for example, a man may be unable to achieve the success he desires because he lacks the intellectual competence. But in many areas the blocks are external. They result from job requirements, supervisory actions, or organizational decisions which can be changed if the need for change is recognized.

Some research carried out among managers in a large delivery company will serve as an illustration (90). Those who wanted to be relatively free and independent in making their own decisions, who derived a feeling of pleasure from being autonomous, were generally considered effective in their work as long as they were able to satisfy their desires. But when people with this kind of motivation felt that they did not have an opportunity to influence decisions regarding their work, the resulting frustration was likely to contribute to ineffective performance. If the desire for independence was minimal, however, it mattered little whether the man was made to feel that he had a say in determining how things were done. His work effectiveness was not influenced by such considerations.

Thus if a man wants something very much, and it is possible to provide it in the job, then there is a good chance his performance will attain a satisfactory level. If he does not want it, there is little to be gained by providing it. Suppose that a subordinate desires above almost anything else to avoid criticism from his supervisor. But he finds that no matter how hard and carefully he works, criticism always follows—presumably because his boss assumes that the more people are pushed, the harder they will work. Finally he gives up. He cannot achieve the freedom from criticism that he wants, and so his performance level declines. Removing or minimizing criticism under such circumstances can produce an amazing change. Similar results can be attained by providing an ambitious individual who has been blocked in his progress with a sense of achievement. Of the men who are failing in lower-level jobs because they want success badly and cannot achieve it within the confines of a menial work assignment, many will perform effectively in more demanding positions if it is possible to promote them.

Although it may be feasible to obtain job-integrated behavior by introducing desired rewards into a man's present position, this is not always possible. Our lonely truck driver, for instance, could not very well achieve satisfaction of his desire for protracted conversation and still perform effectively. It would require a complete redesign of his job—perhaps more along the lines of a delivery salesman's work—or a transfer to a new position entirely in order to give him what he wants from his employment and at the same time obtain satisfactory performance from him. Similar changes may be required when dominant motives such as a need to avoid some anxiety-producing aspect of the work situation, a drive to dominate others, a wish for attention from those at higher levels, a desire for group acceptance, and the like are present. The crucial requirement is that a careful judgment be made as to whether the new job will in fact provide what was lacking in the old.

The job changes discussed above are for the purpose of creating a situation where a man can satisfy dominant motives through integrated activity. What about the case where the man has already been achieving the emotional states desired, but through activity which is not integrated with job requirements and which therefore results in performance failure? To the extent that our truck driver was able to get the social interaction he desired by stopping and talking with people, his case would provide an example. Transfer may, of course, be the only solution when an integrated means of satisfying a dominant motive cannot be found within the confines of the present job. But there are also ways of substituting integrated for unintegrated approaches, of inducing a man to get what he wants through more "desirable" methods. This does not require a reorganization of the motivational hierarchy but only a change in the means employed to satisfy existing motives.

Although such changes can be achieved, they are not easy. The first requirement is that the unintegrated techniques be blocked so they cannot satisfy an employee's desire. If he is avoiding failure by refusing to compete—perhaps he is avoiding work either through absenteeism or constant excuses—he must be convinced that he is really failing, that his behavior is not justified and does not, in fact, protect him from being considered ineffective. At the same time he must be provided with an opportunity to avoid failure through a more integrated approach, and he must be persuaded to use it. He must learn that it is possible to meet the criteria of satisfactory performance on the job. The procedure, then, involves blocking one route for the attainment of what is desired and channeling behavior into an alternative route. If this can be done, the same motive which has previously contributed to failure may be employed to establish a satisfactory level of performance.

To accomplish such a change requires that a manager can make the unintegrated activities fail to achieve their ends, that he can ensure a greater degree of success for integrated efforts, and, finally, that he is capable of exercising great powers of persuasion. He must somehow convince his subordinate that when the unintegrated strategies have failed, it is more beneficial to shift to an integrated approach than to some other unintegrated approach.

The reader who would like some guidance in these efforts may wish to consult the book *Persuasion* (57), which contains an extensive review of social science research on the subject and some helpful hints to the practicing persuader. It was written originally for people in the advertising business. As the book makes clear, persuasion is particularly difficult when the persuader is in some way suspect and his credibility low. Managers may well find themselves so disadvantaged. A subordinate may question the degree to which his superior is actually trying to be of help, and may believe he is being manipulated in accordance with organizational objectives and the personal purposes of the manager. He may feel that improvement of his performance is not particularly desirable or important from his own point of view. Under such conditions, the attempt at persuasion is unlikely to succeed.

Besides the need for inducing ineffective workers to satisfy appropriate motives through integrated methods, there is the problem of getting them to employ acceptable standards of success and failure. Studies indicate that output in textile plants may be increased by allowing workers to set their own production goals (72). These tend to be well above the goals previously in effect. There is no reason why similar results cannot be obtained as a result of a rise in standards in other situations, provided of course, that the standards are not unrealistically high and that the man has the ability. Certainly the ineffective performer who has set excessively low standards for himself can improve considerably if he can be induced to establish his expectations at a higher level. Where some fear of failure is operative, it may be sufficient for the supervisor to set external standards at a level that is considered acceptable and make it clear that action will be taken against those who fall below it. Getting tough can yield results in such cases. Where there is considerable concern with popularity and group acceptance, the man's fellow workers might be induced to set similar standards and apply appropriate pressures. In either situation the man must have some anxiety regarding failure, the external standards must be clear, and it must be obvious that freedom from failure can only be attained through more adequate performance. Where ambition is strong and fear of failure weak, however, the threat of punishment will accomplish nothing. In fact, the effects may well be negative. With this kind of person, clearly established external standards must be combined with a constant emphasis on the rewards available. The man must be given some picture of what he can gain by achieving at a higher level.

This discussion has covered many of the individual motives which may contribute to the level of specific work motivation in various areas of interest—selling, managerial activity, artistic work, etc. But what about the man with general low work motivation? It has been noted that such an individual characteristically has a long string of failures preceding his present employment. In such cases the chances of finding a solution are slight, and there is little that can be done other than separate the man as soon as possible after his performance failure has been established. There are some types of ineffectiveness for which no adequate solution exists at the present time. When a manager is faced with a man who has no known motivation that might induce him to work productively, there is little to be gained by experimenting with a variety of possible solutions.

5

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DISORDERS

WITH this chapter we conclude the treatment of factors within the subordinate himself which may be strategic for ineffective performance. Unfortunately there is no single integrated theory in the physical area which can provide a general foundation for performance analysis, as there is in other areas such as intelligence and motivation. Many of the topics here fall within the province of medicine, although the discussions of that field will be restricted to the specific aspects which are important for managerial action. Other topics involve the areas of vocational rehabilitation, psychiatry and clinical psychology, and still others have no relationship to illness at all. Because of this diversity, such theoretical treatment as seems necessary is presented in each section together with the discussion of practical applications. Solutions to problems also are taken up as they are appropriate, rather than reserved for a separate section.

The first topic will be the general problem of physical illness, its impact on performance, and the methods of dealing with difficulties of this kind. The unique difficulties which may arise with the physically handicapped will be given special attention. So too will problems associated with brain injuries and disorders, which often precipitate behavior similar to that in emotional disorders. Next the physical disorders and conditions which may actually constitute symptoms of emotional illness, a topic which was mentioned briefly in Chapter 3, will be considered in order to show how emotional reactions do produce incapacitating physical states.

The last part of the chapter will deal with physical characteristics which may interact with job demands to produce failure; for example, size, strength, perceptual anomalies, speed of response, bodily coordination, and capacity for fine muscular control. These factors are likely to be strategic in some jobs and of no significance whatsoever in others. Since a number of them are associated with the process of aging, the interaction between age and performance will be analyzed. This should serve to make clear why it is that certain subordinates seem to improve as they grow older while others lose much of their earlier effectiveness.

Physical Illness and Job Performance

There is little to be gained by listing the many symptoms which may appear in conjunction with physical illness. Unlike symptoms of an emotional nature, physical ones are familiar to most of us. From childhood on, most people in our society are taught to recognize and describe the various sensations which may provide a basis for medical diagnosis. As a result most managers are quite capable of identifying sickness in a subordinate—at least insofar as observation and listening to the man can provide a clue. This does not mean that the average manager is qualified to make a specific diagnosis, only that he can usually tell when deficiencies in performance are attributable to sickness. After that, the problem is one for those with specialized medical knowledge. The important managerial role is as a link between the subordinate and the physician. Although this role is much more easily fulfilled when the disorder is physical than when the symptoms are emotional, it may still present certain difficulties. Not all people will seek medical help when they feel ill or when they are injured. Many will even resist when someone else attempts to influence them.

Although it is common for an employee to plead that seeking treatment is somehow "sissified" and unmanly, the basic problem in these cases is almost always fear. Some people seem to feel that a disorder does not really exist until it has been diagnosed; if they can somehow forget about it, it will go away. It is not surprising that managerial efforts to interfere with this process of denial may on occasion meet with active resistance. With other people the various things the physician might do to them establish a block; surgery, blood tests, shots, and the like can be a strong source of negative motivation. The writer remembers one young man who shortly after induction into military service had his first exposure to the art of dentistry. Although scheduled for a second session, he never did attend. After forgetting several appointments and exhausting all other legal alternatives, he finally went AWOL rather than face the buzzing drill again.

In some respects the impact of physical disorder on performance is self-evident: The major reason for failure is extended absence from the job. The number of times the man is absent from work is not nearly so important as the total amount of time lost. It is true that frequent short-term absences are usually a greater supervisory headache, because of the need to cover the work on short notice and because of the constant uncertainty as to whether the man will be present on any given day. But the total amount of time away from work is the major determinant of lost productivity and of any direct loss the company may suffer in terms of payments for work not performed.

In general, female workers tend to be absent more than male. People in higher-level positions, especially those in management, lose less time than those at lower levels. Older workers are absent more, largely because their illnesses and their hospitalizations last longer. They do not have as many short-term absences as younger employees.

In dealing with an individual whose performance is considered inadequate because of excessive absenteeism, a major requirement is that the company maintain contact with him during his time away from work. It is entirely appropriate to take steps to ensure that he is in fact receiving adequate medical care and that the company will be notified when he is physically able to return to his job. True, the company has no right to compel a person to work, but it should be informed when the reason for absence has shifted so that motivational rather than physical factors have assumed a strategic position. Excessive absenteeism is an appropriate basis for establishing performance failure, and when it is caused by physical illness, the man's condition becomes a legitimate matter for company concern.

Studies indicate that the employment of a visiting nurse can reduce the time lost from work (101). This may become rather expensive, especially when the labor force has homes spread over a large area, but the expense can be reduced if the visits cover only individuals with records of excessive absence. In such cases employee and union opposition is likely to be minimal, since the impact of the illness on performance is easily demonstrable. Difficulties are most common when the man does not have a record of excessive absenteeism and thus may easily feel that the visit represents the equivalent of a totally unwarranted accusation.

If visiting nurses cannot be employed and the time a man has lost is excessive, the manager himself should do what he can to maintain contact. Telephone calls are apparently not sufficient for this purpose; they have little effect on absenteeism rates. Someone should actually see and talk with the man, if at all possible. Any such approach should be handled very tactfully, however. There is little to be gained by arriving at the door and announcing that the purpose of the visit is to determine whether the employee is a malingerer. Yet, with tact, contact can be kept up, especially with those whose absenteeism constitutes a real problem, without employee reactions becoming strongly negative. For a manager merely to wait each time until such employees finally arrive back at work before he resumes supervisory responsibilities will not contribute to his own effectiveness.

Illness and injury can, of course, affect the quantity and quality of work directly if medical attention is not obtained. A person may continue on the job and do unsatisfactory work when he should be home in bed or even hospitalized. Moreover, people who have many medical symptoms are also likely to have many emotional symptoms (100). One reason for this is the impact of physical illness on an individual's emotional life. Many people become anxious and afraid when they recognize physical symptoms in themselves. The emotional reaction may even grow into panic and become a symptom in its own right. Or the techniques which a person employs in an effort to ward off the anxiety may develop to the point where they constitute symptoms of emotional illness. Physical symptoms may also induce depression, although this is less common. In any event, these emotions and emotional symptoms may be as detrimental to performance as the physical symptoms themselves.

In fact, sometimes relatively minor physical changes, perhaps not even important enough to be called symptoms, can set off severe emotional breakdowns. Anything that might suggest the presence of a venereal disease or some disorder of the genitals is particularly likely to initiate an intense emotional response. Similarly, an individual may interpret certain "signs" as indicating heart disease or cancer. The writer knows of several people who restricted their work for years, some to the point of actually being considered ineffective, because of a conviction that they suffered from severe heart conditions. Yet when finally these people did seek medical help, no evidence of disease was found.

One group of employees in which physical factors are particularly likely to be strategic, if performance should fall below acceptable levels, is the physically handicapped. Among those who can and do continue in the labor force are people with heart disease, amputations of various kinds, crippling disabilities due to accidents or to diseases like arthritis and infantile paralysis, deafness, blindness, arrested tuberculosis, and epilepsy. Certainly all people with these physical conditions do not become employed. A number are totally incapacitated. But many do seek work and, in spite of sizable obstacles, find positions. In general, handicapped workers tend to be concentrated in lower-level positions. When a man who has previously been physically normal becomes disabled in some manner, he is very likely to return to the labor force in a job below that previously held. Thus, it is the first line supervisor who is most frequently called upon to deal with problems of ineffectiveness attributable to physical handicaps.

All the available evidence indicates, however, that when a man is capable of steady work and is put in the right type of job, there is no particular reason to associate the existence of a handicap with ineffectiveness (95). Absenteeism among handicapped workers generally is, if anything, somewhat less than among the physically normal. Accidents are not particularly frequent, although the total time lost when an accident does occur may be greater. Turnover is characteristically low. Quality and quantity of production are comparable to what is found among workers in general. A few studies have noted slightly poorer work records, but the differences are always small. Certainly there is no basis for assuming that because a man is handicapped he will necessarily be incapable of effective performance. In fact, there are many firms, in addition to those sheltered industries having rehabilitative as well as economic objectives, that make it a practice to employ certain kinds of physically disabled workers (103). The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company has for a number of years employed deaf workers in its plants. Timken Roller Bearing uses the blind to inspect bearings with a very low error tolerance. The Caterpillar Tractor Company has traditionally employed many people with orthopedic difficulties. Eastman Kodak has given preference to those with heart conditions.

There are, of course, problems which are likely to arise in connection with specific disabilities. People with heart conditions may have somewhat higher rates of absenteeism and may have to avoid strenuous physical work. Amputees often become very proficient with artificial limbs, but certain tasks remain impossible. The deaf may learn lipreading or, if the impairment is not total, use hearing aids, but performance of duties such as those required of a stenographer is likely to be seriously impaired. Blindness is often incapacitating when it occurs in adulthood because of difficulty in adjusting to the disorder. When they are adequately trained, however, blind people can perform certain jobs very well. Arrested tuberculosis usually leaves the person with limited strength. As a result frequent rest pauses may be necessary and absenteeism above average. Epilepsy, too, may cause a person to lose more days from work than normal.

When these people do become ineffective for physical reasons, it is almost invariably because they have been placed in a kind of work which their handicaps make it impossible for them to perform adequately. The solution is to get them into more appropriate jobs as quickly as possible. This should be done with medical advice, because in many cases the judgment as to whether the person has the capacity to do the work must be based on extensive knowledge of his condition. In addition, the placement should ensure that the man will not be a hazard to himself or others. Those who operate motor vehicles or potentially dangerous equipment must have the ability to protect themselves and others who work with them. Deaf workers cannot hear warnings; the blind cannot see a potential source of danger; heart attacks and epileptic seizures may cause a person to lose control of his actions.

Studies indicate that the ease with which appropriate placements may be found varies markedly with the nature of the disorder (95). A high proportion of all jobs are inevitably closed to those who have lost the use of both legs and to the totally blind. On the other hand blindness in one eye, loss of fingers, hearing difficulties short of deafness, and inability to use one foot are not nearly as restrictive. Undoubtedly there are companies that will have to dismiss certain handicapped workers who are in every sense employable, because within that particular organization no suitable position is available. In such cases most personnel departments will assist the man in obtaining appropriate work elsewhere. Many workers who have been hired with physical defects or who develop them later can, however, achieve satisfactory performance levels with the company without becoming a burden on anyone, if appropriate duties are assigned. The manager who would like more information on job placements, as well as on rehabilitation programs and on publications dealing with the various conditions, should consult the book *Vocational Rehabilitation for the Physically Handicapped* (103).

In all of the disorders discussed so far the individual fails to perform effectively because of physical symptoms. Where there has been some damage to the brain, however, this need not be the case. Many of the symptoms produced under such circumstances are of the same nature as those of emotional disorder described in Chapter 3. Yet there are important differences in outcome. Emotional disorders can be cured, and in the great majority of cases the individual then is able to achieve an adequate level of performance in some type of work. The symptoms eventually disappear or become less constraining, although it may be many years before this happens. This kind of reversal of the effects may also occur in brain disorders. Many conditions are of an acute nature. The symptoms of alcohol intoxication and concussion, for instance, do not characteristically produce a prolonged deficit in performance. These acute brain disorders are not of much interest to us here for this very reason. Unless the condition is produced repeatedly, they do not function as strategic factors in ineffective performance. There are, however, additional disorders of a permanent nature. Performance may be impaired in such cases, and the difficulty may continue indefinitely. At the present time there is little that can be done medically to restore people with permanent structural brain damage to their previous levels of effectiveness. Where the disorder is of a progressive nature, it may be possible to arrest its course, but that is the best that can be hoped for.

The sources of damage are many. Congenital or hereditary factors may result in defects which continue throughout life. So too may head injuries produced by falls, auto accidents, and the like. Diseases such as syphilis and encephalitis attack the brain. Various toxic drugs and poisons may be involved—alcohol, carbon monoxide, illuminating gas, lead, arsenic, mercury. The last three are particularly likely to be a source of brain damage in certain industries, because they are widely used in paints and dyes. A number of workmen's compensation claims have resulted from poisoning produced by excessive exposure while on the job. Permanent effects on the brain may also occur in conjunction with heart attacks, epilepsy, diabetes, brain tumors, glandular disorders, and nutritional deficiencies. The effects of brain operations carried out in an attempt to cure severe psychoses have already been noted.

There are, in addition, certain changes associated with aging which may result in a progressive impairment of the brain in some people. Certainly not everyone suffers this type of damage as he gets older. Nevertheless, it is by far the most frequent source of brain disorder and one of the major causes of admissions to mental hospitals. The process is characteristically gradual and frequently does not progress far enough to have any significance for management. On occasion, however, it may have considerable impact at a time when the man is at the peak of his career. The probability of such a condition becoming strategic for failure increases steadily from the age of fifty on. If a man is still working in his seventies and becomes ineffective, the possibility of brain damage associated with old age should be one of the first hypotheses entertained.

The specific symptoms which result from brain disorder are much the same irrespective of their source. The major differences are associated with the various stages of the disorder as it develops. Where disease, aging, or progressive poisoning is involved, the symptoms usually develop in gradual progression unless there is medical intervention. When a head injury or some other injury occurring at a single time is responsible, the condition will reflect the extent and type of damage. The symptoms may be minimally incapacitating or they may be very severe.

In the early stages it may not be evident that a defect exists (98). There is some reduction in the speed and effectiveness of actions, especially when the person is dealing with unfamiliar situations; things are done somewhat impulsively, without adequate planning; his emotional states change rapidly from irritability to depression to anxiety; neatness, honesty, and kindness give way to more self-centered attitudes; at times he may appear forgetful and rather vague about things with which he should be familiar. But unless one has known the individual well, these changes may not appear particularly significant. As the condition progresses, however, it becomes increasingly clear that something is wrong

Intellectual processes and memory are obviously disturbed. The man may forget what he is doing or saying, where he is, or what has happened to him in the past. To hide these gaps he may make up stories which can become rather ridiculous, yet he will remain convinced of their validity. On occasion he repeats the same idea or phrase at frequent intervals. His judgment is at first merely poor, but later it becomes evident that he is thoroughly confused. He may then appear restless, very talkative and delirious. Voices which do not exist speak to him, and he sees fleeting images which have no correspondence to reality.

The problem of differentiating these symptoms from those of an emotional disorder is further compounded by the fact that a person suffering from brain damage may well experience considerable emotional upset when he becomes aware of his deficiencies. Such an experience of intellectual impotence represents an extremely powerful threat to emotional stability (97). The resulting anxiety, and efforts to deal with it, can represent a catastrophic reaction and evolve into a full-scale emotional disorder of either neurotic or psychotic proportions. In such complex cases medical and psychological tests can help to determine whether the symptoms are largely physical, emotional, or both.

On occasion, a manager may wonder whether a present failure may not be attributable to changes produced long before. A man may, for instance, fail in a new position, perhaps subsequent to a promotion, after many years of effective performance. Could a head injury or the effects of some arrested disease be strategic? Where these are suspected, a search of the man's medical history can be fruitful. Although such searches rarely prove the case, they can provide strong presumptive evidence, especially if substantiated by psychological testing. Where the man is failing and permanent brain damage is seriously suspected as the cause, demotion to a less demanding position is most likely to provide an adequate solution.

Physical Disorders of Emotional Origin

The close relationship between the experience of emotion and certain physiological changes has been recognized for many years. Among other things there is an elevation in blood pressure and the rate of the heartbeat, an increase in rapidity of breathing, dilation of the pupils of the eye and of the nostrils, and an increase in sweating. In addition, a variety of changes in the glands occur, and various biochemical substances are circulated in the blood (31). These physiological changes may constitute symptoms themselves or contribute directly to the formation of symptoms if certain emotions are persistently aroused. More frequently the process is indirect and involves the activation of efforts to defend against experiencing the emotion.

One such mechanism operates as follows. In Chapter 4, as part of the discussion of unconscious motivation, it was noted that certain unacceptable motives break through to influence behavior in the form of slips of the tongue, "accidents," etc. These actions represent expressions of wishes which were once openly expressed but which later became associated with anxiety. The person learned that to anticipate satisfaction in such activities was bad and would bring on disturbing feelings and events. Apparently, under certain conditions in certain people, physical symptoms in addition to mistakes and slips may become a method of expressing these unconscious motives. Illness proves a perfect disguise and thus serves as an ideal means of warding off the anxiety that would result should a repressed desire become conscious. It is entirely acceptable to have a symptom of physical illness, whereas it is not so acceptable to want to kill a parent or have sexual relations with a person of the same sex. And so the individual attempts to cope with the threat of such impulses through a resort to protracted vomiting or to the symptoms associated with heart disease. Under such circumstances the defensive process is often totally effective and anxiety almost nonexistent, in spite of the presence of a severe physical disorder. The individual has no more idea why he is ill than he might of the reasons behind a slip of the tongue. In other cases the defense, although rigidly maintained, is only partially successful, and the person experiences considerable emotional upset in addition to his physical symptom.

A second mechanism operates somewhat differently. The individual employs the disorder directly as a means of avoiding unpleasant emotions. Any illness that will serve to remove the person from a disturbing situation, without forcing him to recognize his own inability to deal with the situation effectively, can serve this purpose. A sick headache may always develop whenever the young secretary has a date, and may generally make it impossible for her to come to work the next day, too. A faint feeling may overcome an advertising man every time he must make a presentation to a client. In such cases the symptom need not win out, of course. Some motive other than the negative one may assume a dominant position, and the person may continue on to face the situation with the added burden of his symptom. In severe neuroses, however, the symptoms do control behavior.

Sometimes this defensive process operates in a much more complex manner, as in the formation of a stomach ulcer (94). Because the earliest childhood experiences of being taken care of are associated with being fed, eating itself may provide a feeling of security or love and act as a means of warding off anxiety for some individuals. It is this type of motivation that operates frequently in overweight people. The ulcer patient, who as an individual faces frequent and potentially intense anxiety, does not avoid emotional upset by actually eating; but, whenever disturbing situations arise, he does want to be fed. And his body initiates the appropriate physiological mechanisms, among other things, the secretion of acid into the stomach. The resulting acid concentration eventually has an eroding effect on the stomach wall and contributes to the formation of an ulcer. Thus, a physical response adopted to avoid disturbing emotions has unfortunate side effects: The symptom formed can in severe cases result in death.

Almost any physical symptom can be evolved in one of these ways. Unfortunately, current knowledge of why people develop the specific symptoms they do is very incomplete. In some cases hereditary factors seem to have predisposed the person to use certain parts of the body in forming disorders. In other cases it is clear that the symptom is a learned product of life experiences. In any event there is considerable evidence that physical symptoms of emotional origin are based on specific physical sensitivities which vary from individual to individual (107).

This anatomical specificity is well illustrated by a study of a group of patients hospitalized for either neurosis or psychosis. There were forty-seven who had consistently suffered from symptoms associated with the head, primarily headaches, and thirty-four who had had symptoms related to heart functioning (high blood pressure, fainting, heart pain, very rapid beating of the heart). The entire group was exposed repeatedly to a rather painful heat stimulus of a kind which should provoke strong and very unpleasant emotional reactions. At the same time, heart rate and muscle contractions in the back of the neck were both recorded. Among those with a history of head symptoms, neck-muscle contractions (which contribute to the formation of symptoms such as headaches) were characteristically high in this emotionally disturbing situation. Among those without a history of such symptoms there was very little muscle contraction. A similar pattern emerged from the heart-rate recordings. Those with heart symptoms responded to emotional stimuli with changes in heart functioning; those without such complaints were less likely to do so.

In another study, researchers found that they could expose ragweed-sensitive hay-fever sufferers to large doses of pollen with minimal manifestation of symptoms as long as a tranquil and emotionally peaceful atmosphere was maintained. However, when the pollen was combined with a discussion of topics known to be emotionally disturbing to the person, severe hay-fever symptoms were produced. The role of emotional factors in the symptoms and the tendency toward a characteristic type of physical response was clearly demonstrated.

Similar studies have established the role of emotional factors in many other disorders, including epilepsy, diabetes, excessive fatigue, arthritis, constipation and diarrhea, backache, high blood pressure, hives and other skin diseases, disturbances of urinary function, impotence, and asthma. This is not to say that these conditions are always caused by emotional factors, or that physical causes may not interact with the emotional, as in the cases of hay fever above. The differentiation of causes in any specific case is very difficult. Sometimes, for instance, a person will acquire a physically incapacitating condition, such as a sprain, as a result of nonemotional causes, only to have the disorder perpetuated indefinitely by emotional factors.

From the managerial viewpoint, of course, the separation of strictly physical symptoms from those which also have an emotional aspect is important. The treatments differ in nature and duration, and prospects for a continuation of any performance deficit are not the same. If an emotional factor is strategic, then the appropriate solutions are those noted in Chapter 3. There are innumerable instances where physical symptoms have been cured in psychotherapy, for instance.

When a physical symptom of emotional origin is strategic for ineffective performance and no other severe emotional symptoms are in evidence, it is very difficult to conclude that a neurosis is present without specialized training beyond that which the average manager has. Furthermore, the man himself will in all probability be convinced of the purely physical nature of his symptoms. He can be expected to resist actively any suggestion that it is an emotional disorder which needs treating. Under these circumstances, even if emotional causation is suspected, it is best to have the man thoroughly checked for physical causation. In some instances the medical examination will unearth nothing that would even suggest a physical reason for the condition. It is accordingly probable that the causation is emotional. In other instances a period of extensive and varied medical treatment will have no effect. The man may even have visited several different physicians with no result. When medical treatment which should have helped has thus consistently failed, it is appropriate to conclude that emotional causation may very well be involved.

Physical Characteristics and Job Performance

Perhaps the most obvious relationships between physical characteristics and performance are in the area of bodily proportions. Success in various sports is strongly influenced by such factors. A short man can rarely compete effectively at basketball, a big man as a jockey, or a light man at football. Although generally such distinctions are much less important in industry, sometimes a problem will arise because of the design of equipment. The construction of machinery must be based on some assumptions regarding the range of physical proportions of future operators, and occasionally a man is hired who falls outside this range. Very short people may find it difficult to reach the controls of certain kinds of vehicles. People with very long legs may be so cramped that they cannot get adequate leverage on foot pedals. Usually these problems are easily identified. Transfer to a more physically suitable type of work is the most appropriate solution.

The aesthetic qualities of various physical characteristics are unlikely to have any effect on performance, outside of a few obvious occupations such as modeling, acting, and similar fields. However, such factors may influence *judgments* of effectiveness. It is easy to assume, almost without thinking, that a physically unattractive person is equally deficient in job-related skills. On the other hand, many a young secretary has maintained her position despite continued inability to fulfill job demands because of her contribution to office décor. It is not always easy to separate such inappropriate criteria from those which are in fact related to company objectives.

A somewhat more important physical factor involves the use of various muscles and muscle groups in carrying out work activities. Characteristics such as speed of muscular response, muscular dexterity, and strength vary considerably from person to person and may become sources of failure. Women, for instance, are usually inferior in physical strength and speed of reaction, but they surpass men in manipulative dexterity. As a result women are more likely than men to fail in unskilled laboring jobs (which they hold in many countries) but more likely to succeed in intricate assembly work (99).

Although there are certainly inherent differences between people in physical speed, strength, and dexterity, training can have considerable impact on the final skill level exhibited. This learning tends to be specialized; those who possess one kind of skill do not necessarily possess others (96). Gross coordination of the arms and legs, the speed of muscular reaction, balance, and the various fine dexterities involving the use of the fingers, hands, or arms, are relatively independent skills. They may be developed to a point of minimal proficiency very rapidly, but further training continues to yield increments in performance over long periods of time. As a result, extensive practice may be required before a level considered adequate for effective performance on the job is attained. Some people may never reach it.

Actually, when it is said of a man that he possesses a certain level of manual dexterity or physical agility, it indicates something about the rate at which he might be expected to learn new tasks of a related nature and about the final level of proficiency that he is likely to attain. Studies of textile machine operators, for instance, indicate tremendous variation in rate of production, both during the training period and later, as a function of differences in finger dexterity (102). When a person is considered ineffective because of a deficiency in some motor ability which his job requires, this implies that he has not attained a satisfactory level of proficiency after having had a reasonable amount of adequate training.

Although muscular activity, especially strength, has played an important role in many jobs throughout history, the number of positions requiring such skills is steadily decreasing. Machinery, often automated, is taking over from human muscle power and dexterity. In one study of 124 different occupations, only 8 were still commonly filled by people with a well-above-average level of muscular skill. These were airplane pilot, control-tower operator, sales engineer, machinist, appliance mechanic, office machine mechanic, mine driller, and printing pressman (22). Many of the jobs which continue to make demands in this area are at a relatively low level and may be redesigned in the future to eliminate the motor requirements. In fact, some of these jobs are already in transition, being performed manually in some companies and mechanically in others. The requirements which have already started to change or may be expected to in the near future include: finger dexterity among semiskilled assemblers of electrical equipment and among workers engaged in metal processing; motor speed among painters and shoe-factory workers; arm dexterity among laundry pressers and molders; manual dexterity among various types of packers and certain clerical workers (4).

Some of the most comprehensive research on relationships between physical skills and performance has been conducted to improve the operation of airplanes, both military and civilian (101). Tests of various abilities have proved particularly valuable in selecting those who will be proficient pilots. For this purpose the most important skills appear to be the ability to carry out complex, coordinated movements of hands and feet in response to visual signals and the ability to coordinate the action of both hands simultaneously. Pilots in training who lack these dexterities are unlikely to graduate and achieve placement in commercial aircraft. If they do, there is a good chance that they will be unsatisfactory.

Few other occupations have been studied as extensively as that of airplane pilot, and because of the declining significance of motor skills generally, it is unlikely that they ever will be. As a result, managers may not be able to obtain very precise diagnostic information regarding the role of muscular factors in failure. Nevertheless, there are a number of tests of motor proficiency available. The standardized tests of secretarial skills are perhaps the best known, but there are many others. If it is impossible to determine from close observation of the person on the job whether his failure is due to problems of physical skill, emotional disruption, or motivational inadequacies, a check with a specialist in the area of performance analysis may be helpful.

Once it has been established that some type of muscular speed, strength, or dexterity is important in work, and that the man is failing because he does not meet these demands, the manager can take appropriate action. If the man lacks the requisite strength or stamina, there is a possibility that he might gain it through physical-fitness training of some kind. Often, however, this is either impractical or too time-consuming to provide a solution. In such instances transfer to a less physically demanding type of work is most appropriate. But if the man is already in an unskilled job—and this is likely to be the case, since laboring jobs are among the few that consistently require considerable physical strength—transfer may not be easy. This problem will be taken up shortly in the discussion of older workers.

Where the difficulty involves muscular skill more specifically, training may provide a solution. Possibly the man has not had an adequate opportunity to develop the coordinated movements required, and perhaps with more extended learning he could attain a satisfactory level of performance. If his training has been curtailed or clearly inadequate in some respect, this is an obvious answer. But if he has completed the normal training without achieving the requisite standard, a decision is necessary as to how much additional training should be permitted. There comes a point at which further investment in the learning process is not warranted; it is conceivable that the man might eventually achieve acceptable performance, but the cost of getting him there would be prohibitive. In such a case transfer to some other type of work is appropriate. The new job need not be devoid of physical demands, although it should not impose requirements similar to those of the position in which failure occurred. Since the various physical skills are essentially independent, failure in one indicates little about proficiency in others.

In addition to bodily proportions and muscular abilities, sensory capacities may also influence performance. Among the various senses, however, only vision and hearing are likely to be strategic. Many people who suffer from defects of these senses (although they are not truly handicapped) are regularly placed in work where their deficiencies put them at a disadvantage. In part this is because of a failure to carry out sufficient preemployment testing, in part because of the generally unreliable nature of mass physical examinations. Various studies indicate that a second physical examination based on identical standards, by another physician may disqualify from 20 to 50 percent of those who have previously been certified as physically qualified for employment (101). It is evident that people with defects sufficient to produce performance failure may well appear in any employee group. Where certain perceptual skills are particularly important in the work, this can be one of the more common strategic factors.

Within the visual realm, such defects as far- and nearsightedness are frequent sources of difficulty. The individual may not be able to see clearly because his glasses are inappropriate, because the condition cannot be corrected, or because he needs glasses. Such factors can be a major source of error in many jobs, since adequate discriminations cannot be made when vision is defective. Under certain conditions, as, for example, when a man's work requires him to operate some means of transportation, other visual factors may become strategic—ability to see at night, peripheral vision, depth perception, color vision. The latter is particularly important when colored signals or safety indicators are employed in connection with the work. An electrician who must differentiate between colored wires can make some dramatic mistakes if he is not capable of perceiving color differences. Approximately 8 percent of all males (and less than half of 1 percent of all females) show some degree of color blindness; 2 percent are totally unable to tell red from green.

Besides these visual capacities there is also a skill which has been called perceptual speed. Many jobs require that a person rapidly and accurately identify small differences in visual detail. In one respect, reading demands this ability. Perceptual speed is a major requirement in many clerical occupations where one list must be checked against another or computations compared. Inspection jobs of various types also demand it. Often a job requires perceptual speed and motor speed in combination; the individual must quickly note something and then respond with some appropriate action. Where a person lacks perceptual speed, the quantity of work he produces is likely to be insufficient. Or if he is pressured into increasing his output, there is a sharp increase in the number of errors.

Auditory problems are less diverse than visual and usually arise from difficulties in hearing sounds of a certain pitch. Often the person thinks he hears one thing and acts accordingly, only to learn that he was wrong. Some partially deaf people go to considerable lengths to cover their deficiencies by guessing at what others have said. Many times they are right; they combine what they have heard with a knowledge of the context to obtain an estimate of what they have not heard. On other occasions they are wrong. And if these occasions should consistently coincide with the giving of job assignments and instructions, the resulting errors may be frequent and serious. In addition to problems of hearing the human voice, difficulty in perceiving auditory signals can sometimes be strategic.

Differences between job conditions and the conditions under which medical and psychological tests of visual and auditory capabilities are administered sometimes make the tests less valuable than they might be. For instance, auditory tests are usually conducted in a noise-free room. But the man who works in a noisy factory must be able to pick out significant words from a mass of background sounds.

Often when a manager has a hunch that a perceptual problem is at the root of a subordinate's failure, it is possible with a little ingenuity to devise a practical test on the spot. Varying the loudness of speech during conversation may provide clues regarding auditory perception. Color vision can be tested by asking for information regarding objects which do not have their normal color. Visual acuity may be checked by asking a man to read an old newspaper headline from a distance. If these methods suggest that a defect exists, a comprehensive clinical evaluation is in order. Once sensory deficiencies have been identified by whatever means, they should be handled in the same manner as physical handicaps. Various corrective devices such as eyeglasses or hearing aids are, of course, more likely to restore effective performance in these cases than among the severely disabled.

Almost all the muscular and sensory abilities noted in this section tend to decline with age—speed of movement, dexterity and coordination, physical strength, visual and auditory sensitivity, and perceptual speed (104). In general, the decline starts in the late twenties and is gradual in nature. There are major differences between individuals, however. While some people maintain certain abilities at an almost constant level throughout life, others show a precipitous decline. The result is that the differences in any one of these physical characteristics within a group of men in their sixties will be much greater than those within a group of twenty-year-olds. Thus, although deficiencies of this kind are increasingly likely to be strategic for performance failure as life progresses, there is no reason to assume that physical characteristics will necessarily contribute to ineffectiveness in an older employee.

In fact, there are studies which suggest that the impact of this decline on actual job performance may be minimal in many instances. An analysis of production records maintained for 6,000 clerical workers in five government agencies and twenty-one different companies indicated that there were essentially no differences associated with age (105). Separate analysis by sex yielded the same results. The occupations were primarily of a routine nature—typists, keypunch operators, and various clerks engaged in filing, posting, and sorting activities. The older workers did as well as younger ones and were no more likely to fall below acceptable levels of performance.

On the other hand, findings from similar studies carried out among factory workers in the men's footwear, men's clothing, and household furniture industries did indicate a decline in the performance of the older workers. The number of ineffectives increased steadily above the age of forty-five. Presumably the differences between the two studies are attributable to the varying physical demands of the jobs. Strength and stamina are of considerable importance in the factory jobs, and as the men got older they were incapable of maintaining an adequate rate of output. The clerical positions, on the other hand, require finer muscular skills, to the extent that they require physical abilities at all. Dexterities of this kind are more likely to be aided by continued practice. This, plus the increases in job-related mental abilities which come with age, presumably served to counteract any decline in physical competence.

Whether or not older workers will actually perform less effectively, then, depends on the extent to which a reduction in physical capacities makes any difference in the particular kind of work they are doing and on the extent to which they are able to compensate for the physical changes. Up to a point, most people can make up for any detrimental effects of physical deficiencies through increased motivation, superior mental abilities, greater job knowledge, and the like. But when the physical demands are primary and the deficiencies marked, performance will suffer. This is much more likely to happen in occupations of a blue-collar nature than it is in clerical and managerial groups.

Some recent studies indicate that much of this decline in performance is attributable to a general slowing down with age (106). Perceptual and motor speed are markedly affected. Most older workers apparently can perform various job duties just as well as those who are much younger, but they cannot repeat the operations over and over again at the same rate. Even the strength which is required in connection with most unskilled positions is entirely within the capabilities of most employees of more advanced age. But the majority cannot maintain the pace. If they are pressed to increase their output, quality will fall off badly. When left to their own devices, most older workers who have experienced some decline in a job-related ability will concentrate on accuracy. A complete elimination of errors is the only way they can approach an adequate overall performance level.

This fact appears to provide an important clue to the placement of older workers who have failed because of declining physical abilities. If the man can be shifted to a job which does not require any physical characteristics he lacks, that is, of course, ideal. But with many lower-level workers there is no other position for which they are qualified. The next-best alternative is to shift them to positions where a penchant for accuracy at the expense of speed is desirable. Placement in assembly-line jobs which require constant repetition of the same physically demanding activities is not likely to restore effective performance. Unskilled work involving continuous digging or loading operations is also of dubious value. Janitorial activities, on the other hand, may present no difficulties even though the work is occasionally heavy. The important thing is to eliminate any pacing of the work or constant repetition of the same movements.

6

FAMILY TIES

THE discussion so far has dealt with the individual characteristics of a subordinate which may contribute to his failure: the intellectual, emotional, motivational, and physical factors which may become strategic. We will turn now to several group or social factors which often serve as determinants of ineffectiveness. These group factors will be treated in ascending order of size. This and the ensuing chapter will deal with the two smaller groups which can directly influence a person's job performance—the family and the group at work.

The term *family* will be used in a comprehensive sense. In much of the discussion it will mean the original group into which the employee was born. This includes parents, brothers, sisters, and on occasion, other relatives. Sometimes as a result of divorce and remarriage, it becomes a very complex unit indeed. This group remains important to the individual throughout its existence, although it usually loses some of its significance as he progresses into adulthood. In addition, the term *family* will denote the family the individual creates by marriage or, on occasion, by mutual agreement. Customarily it includes a husband, wife, and children. It may combine to some degree with the parental families of either husband or wife. A third family consisting of the parents of the marital partner may also assume a strategic position under certain circumstances. Sometimes the wife's parents have a surprisingly strong influence on a man's performance.

Since the next chapter will be devoted entirely to social relationships on the job, the reader may wonder at the neglect of other small groups in which an individual may hold membership—the various friendship groups, clubs, gangs, etc., as well as the relationships formed in engagements and "going steady." The reason for their omission is that these associations do not appear to have an impact on performance very often. When they do achieve a strategic position, it is through routes similar to those discussed here. Thus, what is said about the influence of the family can generally be applied equally well to any other small group outside the work situation.

There is one unique feature associated with the identification of family factors in performance analysis which is important primarily because of the opportunities for error it introduces. Events occurring in the parental family during a much earlier period may have considerable impact on the emotional and motivational patterns a person brings to his job. To some extent intellectual and physical characteristics are similarly affected. Performance failure is often influenced by things that happened many years before, in the so-called formative years. Factors such as mental illness of parents, separation and divorce, parental conflict, lack of affection in the family, overrestriction of activities, mental illness of a brother or sister, and intense conflict with other family members are much more common in the early histories of adult neurotics than of those who do not become ill (112). Presumably these experiences contribute in some way to the sensitivities which later combine with situational stresses to produce breakdown. Similarly, when people who are known to have made poor occupational adjustments, for whatever reason, are compared with those who have performed effectively, a pattern of early family problems emerges (110). The ineffectives had more conflict with their parents and received less affection. Criminal behavior, emotional disorder, and other deviations were more common within their families. In addition, a tendency to lean on their parents to an excessive degree was actively fostered at home.

Such influences are, however, indirect in that the family does not operate here and now to produce the ineffective performance. The actual strategic factors are only conditioned by the family events of years before. Although much of what the manager has to deal with is a result of childhood experiences, these experiences themselves do not operate directly to create ineffectiveness. For this reason, the discussion will be restricted to those family influences which can be present at the time of failure. These may, of course, on occasion be continuations or repetitions of influences initiated many years before. In any event, we will not be concerned with the parental family as it contributed to the development of individual characteristics at a much earlier date. Such matters are not of legitimate concern in conducting a performance analysis.

Among the factors which may operate here and now to influence a man's behavior at work are crises in the family, separation from the family, and a variety of demands and actions within the home which serve to make his work seem distinctly secondary to him. These will be taken up in order and the matter of corrective action then discussed.

Family Crises

The term *crisis* has been applied to a number of different events which may have severely disruptive effects on a family. Sociologists have not always been in accord in drawing up lists of these events, but there seems to be general agreement that at least three categories are relevant (108). First among these is economic shock or impoverishment: the sudden loss of savings and income so that the family cannot continue to support itself as a group. Much of the research in this area has dealt with the effects of bank failures and unemployment during periods of depression. Although crises of this kind may become strategic for performance failure, this is rather infrequent since usually the loss of employment is inherent in the crisis situation. In other cases the economic factors which become strategic in a man's performance do not involve his family and so fall outside the scope of this chapter. For these reasons economic crises will not be treated here, even though from a broader sociological perspective they may have considerable importance.

A second type of event is clearly relevant to this discussion. It involves the actual or imminent disruption of the family by desertion, separation, or divorce. As noted previously, either the parental family or the family formed by the individual's marriage may be strategic. Sometimes the disintegration of a man's parental family can be as sharp a blow as the breakup of his own marital relationship. The disruption need not actually take place for a crisis to be strategic, but the probability of occurrence must be very high. Infidelity, for instance, may have the same emotional meaning as divorce, even though there is in the end no actual dissolution of the marriage. Both may carry an implication of total rejection and betrayal.

Crises in a third category are even more likely to contribute to deficiencies on the job. These involve the severe illness or death of a family member. Although physical illness with its threat of imminent bereavement is most likely to be associated with a crisis situation, emotional disorders of psychotic proportions can have a similar impact. Suicide is probably more apt to have a negative effect on other family members than any other single factor. To these events involving loss or dismemberment should no doubt be added a few instances of increased membership. On occasion the birth of an unwanted child, whether illegitimate or not, can have a sizable impact on the performance of a family member.

These crises most often cause ineffectiveness as a result of the emotional responses which they instigate. What the manager observes directly is a rapid deterioration of performance along the lines described in Chapter 3. There may be sufficient stress to provoke a full-scale emotional disorder in some cases, although usually it is just the frequent arousal of overpowering emotion that disrupts work. Sometimes the reaction is primarily motivational. The crisis rearranges the individual's hierarchy of motives and introduces new methods of obtaining satisfactions so that there may be a sizable increase in activity which is unintegrated with the job. Whether the reaction is primarily emotional or motivational, however, the fact of sudden change should suggest to the manager that some kind of family crisis may be strategic. The existence of a crisis is particularly likely when a subordinate unexpectedly announces his intention to resign without having formulated any definite plans for the future. Although such resignations occur for many reasons, it is not uncommon for a person who has just experienced a severe family crisis to attempt to get away from it all and start over again.

These comments should not be taken to imply that family crises will inevitably result in performance failure. Although most people will be affected emotionally by such events, the majority will not permit their performance to suffer. In other cases the deficit will be only temporary. There are tremendous differences between people in their reactions to specific crises and within people in their sensitivities to varying events.

Why some employees become totally preoccupied with certain family problems while others weather them with little difficulty is a matter which is only beginning to receive scientific attention. In this respect it is similar to many other topics treated in this chapter. Although a great deal is known about how economic and employment factors influence the family (109), there has been very little research on the reverse relationship—how family events and conditions influence performance at work.

One aspect of the response to crises which has received considerable study is the grief reaction in cases of bereavement. Certain kinds of symptoms have been observed repeatedly among those who become temporarily disturbed after the loss of a loved one. When illnesses of a more extended nature result from grief, they tend to follow equally well-defined patterns. Since every manager can expect to handle at least one case of acute grief during his career, a knowledge of these patterns and their relationships to performance should be helpful. Responses to the loss of a family member for reasons other than death may take a very similar course. Desertion, separation, and divorce (and sometimes the breakup of an engagement or an affair) can provoke grief reactions which are emotionally identical with those precipitated by death, although certain external manifestations may differ.

One of the most significant studies of bereavement dealt with 101 people who responded with varying degrees of emotional upset to the death of a loved one (114). They were interviewed extensively during the grief reaction, and all symptoms were noted. When the reaction was of relatively short duration, the manifestations were as follows: periods of physical distress which involved tightness in the throat, shortness of breath and sighing, an empty feeling in the stomach, and an overall sensation of weakness or exhaustion; preoccupation with the image of the deceased person to the point where it was almost impossible to think about anyone else; feelings of guilt, often manifested in a tendency to self-blame whenever any unhappiness experienced by the deceased person was mentioned; considerable irritability and anger in dealing with others, often involving total rejection of some former friends; changes in typical behavior because activities previously carried out with the deceased now seemed empty and meaningless. Sometimes there was also a tendency to assume characteristics of the lost person—mannerisms, hobbies, even symptoms manifested during the terminal illness.

As a result of these preoccupations and emotions, a bereaved person may be completely unable to concentrate on his work. If the unpleasant feelings are accepted and not avoided, this process should run its course within a reasonable period. Difficulties commonly arise, however, if the man attempts to blot out all memory of the deceased and thus ward off distress. Under these circumstances there may be practically no expression of unpleasant emotion for a considerable time. Often he dives into his job with great gusto. Then, several weeks or even several months later, the depressive feelings may break through in such overwhelming proportions that work becomes totally impossible. At such times there may be almost constant crying.

These more severe emotional responses to loss may, of course, occur immediately following the crisis as well as after a delay. Usually they include exaggerations of the reactions noted previously. The rejection of friends may be complete, and intense hatred of them may even develop. Physical symptoms of emotional origin may be manifested. Bloody diarrhea is frequently associated with an experience of loss (107); so too are the symptoms of arthritis and asthma. The man may become indecisive, unable to initiate any activity unless prodded. In the most extreme cases a depression of psychotic proportions may emerge, with symptoms such as marked tension, constant activity, sleeplessness, feelings of inadequacy, bitter self-accusations, and an intense desire to be punished for imagined misdeeds. Such people can become suicidal.

Separation

In many of the crisis situations noted, at least part of the distress is precipitated by the threat or actual fact of being separated from an emotionally significant person. Certainly this is true where desertion, divorce, physical illness, or death are involved. In addition, there are many other instances of separation which would not be considered crises except in terms of the individual's reaction to them.

Very young children often become depressed and apathetic when separated from their parents for hospitalization or other reasons, and remain "clingy" and disturbed for some time after returning to the family. Child psychologists are frequently called upon to treat school phobias in youngsters who become terrified each day when it is time to leave home. Later, a child's homesickness may disrupt a stay at summer camp or with relatives. Such reactions are not restricted to the early years. Armies have been plagued throughout history with desertions occasioned by an intense desire to return to the family. This was such a problem to the Nationalist Chinese that they adopted a policy of flying all new conscripts to training camps many hundreds of miles removed from the men's homes. Studies of prison inmates indicate that separation from the family is their primary source of anxiety (113).

In the business world this separation anxiety (or homesickness) can assume importance when the man must be away from a significant family for considerable periods. It is therefore most likely to be a problem among salesmen, traveling auditors, consultants, and managers whose duties call for frequent trips to company facilities out of town. It can also be troublesome in transportation industries and in companies which make it a policy to send people on extended assignments without their families.

It is not uncommon for employees to perform much less effectively away from home than they do when able to return to their families every evening. Unfortunately, the man who is separated from his family is also often separated from direct supervision. As a result, performance failure does not become evident immediately and may, in fact, never manifest itself clearly unless the man becomes severely disturbed. Certainly a manager should make every effort to keep a close check on the performance of a subordinate working away from home for the first time. Once it is clear that separation anxiety is not elicited, of course, such intensive efforts need not be maintained.

What actually happens in separation anxiety is similar to several processes which have already been noted. All of us tend, on occasion, to seek the help and support of certain family members and friends when we are upset about something. We ask others to assist us in making decisions and to cheer us up when we feel dejected. In some people this response to anxiety and other unpleasant emotions has assumed the position of a standard defense, an invariant method of reacting to the slightest hint of emotional distress. As long as the need to lean on others can be exercised without disrupting other activities, there is no real problem. Once separation occurs, however, the motive cannot be satisfied. Away from his family a man with such a motive may lose all sense of security, feel lost and helpless, and eventually become so anxious and depressed that work is almost impossible. In many cases this pattern is similar to a grief reaction in that it includes an irritable attitude toward others and an inability to reach decisions or initiate activity. Since men who spend considerable time on the road may well be called upon to meet new people, often customers, and to make important decisions on the spot, this kind of response to separation can have extremely detrimental effects.

Anxiety reactions need not manifest themselves immediately at the time of separation. Many people are able to do effective work away from home for a long time before absence from the family begins to have its effect. In these instances the fears and sense of helplessness are at first counteracted by other strong motives. Finally, the individual is no longer able to compensate in this manner, and despite all his efforts the caliber of his work falls off.

Some men who find separation from their families emotionally difficult avoid it for this reason. But others make a deliberate effort to prove themselves by volunteering for traveling assignments and applying for jobs which keep them away from home. Therefore a man cannot be counted on to evaluate his own strengths and weaknesses correctly in this respect. The decision regarding work away from home should be a managerial one and should be based on an objective evaluation of the individual. Of course, some people who seek such work do so because they actually want to get away from home. They may even perform more effectively when freed of their intolerable family situation. In one investigation of the effects of separation during wartime, well over 10 percent of the men studied viewed being drafted as a welcome release (111).

In a different form of separation, one of a man's families remains intact while he is separated from another. When a man, his wife, and his children move because he has been transferred or has taken a job outside the local area, problems may arise because he must leave his parental family behind. When the relationship between the two families has been very close and the man has never been separated from his parents for any extended period, a move to another part of the country can present a real threat. In spite of the increasing mobility of the "corporate family," this situation remains a potential source of difficulty even within management. Some men will refuse to accept a transfer out of the town in which their parents live and, if pressured, will seek employment with another company to ensure against separation. Others will accept or even seek the change only to find themselves incapable of adjusting. They may ask to return to the former position or may resign rather suddenly to move back to their hometown. Rarely does a man explain any of these actions as being due to a desire to maintain close contact with a parental family. The manager may have to dig under a massive barrage of "rational" explanations to unearth the true cause. The man himself may not be aware of his real motives or of the sources of his distress.

The possible strength of this type of motivation is perhaps not generally recognized. Although most people who reject jobs requiring separation from their parents and friends would not be ineffective if they did make the change, it is still true that attachments of this kind often influence important decisions. Many young men will not even consider careers that might force them to leave the area where their parents live. With regard to education, one of the major reasons why a large number of qualified young people do not attend college is that appropriate opportunities do not exist near home, and they do not wish to leave their families to enter institutions many miles away.

Crisis reactions appear to be accentuated by separation under certain circumstances. If a man is away from home and has reason to believe that his wife is unfaithful or contemplating divorce, or that the integrity of the family group is threatened in some other way, the fact of separation may make any crisis reaction much more severe. Being away from the locus of the trouble produces a sense of helplessness which serves to intensify emotional experiences. It may be that the man could do nothing to avert the crisis, but separation precludes the possibility even of trying.

Separation may also cause ineffectiveness in instances where the family has been counteracting an employee's intellectual and physical deficiencies. Away from home he may have to face situations which demand more than he can accomplish alone. For example, many low-intelligence people are able to maintain adequate performance in unskilled jobs by relying on family members for assistance with personal finances and other matters. Or a man who does not understand something that develops in connection with his work can sometimes take the problem home and obtain a solution for subsequent use in comparable situations. Separation precludes this type of help and may therefore turn a satisfactory worker into an unsatisfactory one.

Somewhat similar is the situation of the man who has no family or close personal relationships that he can turn to in time of need. Here it is not separation but a total lack of emotional support that is crucial; social isolation can leave a man extremely vulnerable to emotional breakdown. The presence of other people and the opportunity to talk over problems, as well as the sense of being wanted that goes with being a member of a family or close group, can be very important as a buffer against difficult circumstances. Thus, although isolation is unlikely to be strategic for failure in itself, the lack of group ties may serve as a catalyst in the rapid development of debilitating emotional responses under conditions of stress. It has already been noted that psychoses with anxiety predominating develop with unusual frequency in the downtown areas of large cities, where rooming-house districts are located and where family ties are at a minimum.

Predominance of Family Considerations over Work Demands

In a sense, the reactions to crises and to separation which have been discussed represent instances where family considerations have taken precedence over job performance. This conflict between family and occupational spheres is also evident in other cases where no direct threat to family unity is involved. In fact, in these cases it is the presence of the family that creates the difficulty. There are a number of ways in which situations of this kind may develop. The discussion here will be limited to those which in the writer's experience have represented the major causes of performance deficit.

One common problem arises when a subordinate is more responsive to the demands of family members than to those of his superiors at work. A wife may feel lonely and neglected, resenting any intrusion on "her time" occasioned by overtime work, business trips, and the like. She may even resent the fact that her husband must be at work eight hours a day. Shift work schedules are particularly likely to stir up such reactions. The result may be that the man goes to his superior and refuses to work overtime, or travel, or accept a shift assignment. Another effect may be that his absenteeism becomes excessive. Whether or not he reacts in these ways depends as much on him as on the wife. Many men are exposed throughout life to a tug of war between family and job demands. Some are able to give precedence to the employment relationship when this is necessary to maintain an adequate performance level, while others tend to allow family demands to predominate.

On occasion, family demands of this kind stem from problems created by children. The writer has dealt with several cases where, when the mother became the least bit ill, the father was expected to stay home from work and take care of the children. If a wife suffers from some physical disorder having primarily emotional causes, this can result in an excessive amount of lost time. In such a case the husband is often called away from work during the middle of the day to tend his offspring, although he may not describe the situation to his boss in quite these terms. Difficulties with children are particularly frequent when both wife and husband work. Under such circumstances one or both may stay at home whenever there is some difficulty with the sitter or when the children are sick.

It is also true that the wife may be the one who becomes very upset when separation from the parental family occurs. This is perhaps most common when the family has been sent to a foreign installation. Actually, the incidence of breakdowns attributable to separation and exposure to unfamiliar situations may well be higher in any given company among wives than among the men themselves. This is primarily because the men have usually been appraised to determine whether they can be expected to perform effectively in the new assignment, while wives are rarely evaluated in this manner. In addition, women probably maintain close ties to their parents over a longer period than men do. Since the wife is also likely to be younger than her husband, she may well be leaving home for the first time on the occasion of his assignment, while he may already have been away at college or in the armed forces.

The solutions to family problems caused by a wife's separation reaction are varied. In some cases she may enter psychiatric treatment. Or she may eventually adjust to the separation. Sometimes she will continue to be upset over an extended period, but her condition will have little effect on her husband's performance. On occasion more drastic solutions, such as divorce, are sought. Or the wife may merely return to her home while the man continues at work. She may become severely depressed and even commit suicide, although this is rare. When a man does place family factors above his job and permits his performance to be drastically affected, he may do so only because he believes his family is threatened with disintegration in some such manner.

There are other cases where a man's failure on the job seems to be only part of a complex pattern of family trouble and emotional upset. It has been recognized for years that people treated for emotional disorders in mental hospitals and discharged as cured often become disturbed again shortly after returning to their families. It is now known that the family can establish the conditions of threat which serve to precipitate or prolong symptoms of emotional disorder, and that even though only one member actually becomes ill, the whole group may be basically disturbed (109). There has been an increasing tendency for psychiatrists and clinical psychologists to carry out treatment in the home with the whole family, rather than in an office with only the person who has sought help.

A continuing condition of threat in the home may provoke emotional reactions in a subordinate which, although not sufficient to be considered indicative of illness, nevertheless disrupt performance. Among young men in their teens and early twenties there may well be a severe conflict with the parents which carries over into the work situation. The son often wishes to break free of family control but maintain some dependence on his family for financial and other types of assistance. However, the parents, who often have younger children at home, may feel it necessary to retain control over the son's behavior as long as he lives in the house. Yet they may expect him to take care of himself financially, sometimes to the point of contributing to the household. Under these conditions the young man may tend to confuse supervisory control with parental control and react to his superiors' directions with the same emotionality that he shows toward his father. As a result he may have a disruptive effect on the performance of his work group. He may also refuse to do his share of the work out of sheer negativism and may attempt to get even with those he considers responsible for infringements on his freedom. When the young man finally leaves his parents' home, it is not unusual for performance to improve in a striking manner.

Disruptive effects of conditions in the home are not, of course, restricted to young unmarried males. A working wife's success at her job may leave her less successful husband so overcome with shame that his performance is severely impaired. Every time he approaches the work environment, he may be reminded of his own inadequacy. In a different case, the family may provide so completely for an individual's needs and desires, financial and otherwise, that he sees no necessity for job-integrated behavior. Or two brothers may bring their rivalries to the job, with detrimental consequences for the performance of one or both. Employment of several members of the same family need not lead to difficulties, of course, but if the family situation is disturbed, hiring several members to work in close proximity guarantees the transfer of home problems into the work environment.

The Possibilities for Managerial Action

The existence of family factors in ineffective performance presents special managerial problems which are not easily solved. The locus of the difficulty is outside the usual orbit of supervisory control, and it is very difficult to accomplish a change. Where a man has some type of family crisis and responds with the characteristic grief reaction, there is practically nothing that can be done. However, as long as he accepts the pain of loss and expresses his sorrow without resorting to extremes, there is little need to take action. Usually performance will suffer for a while, but as he works through his problems, it will be restored to a satisfactory level. The important thing for the manager is to refrain from any harsh reactions when the man demonstrates an inability to maintain adequate performance. At such times sympathy and understanding are most likely to produce the desired result. If the man is of a religious bent, the manager might recommend that he talk with his minister, priest, or rabbi. Above all else, the man must have time to express his emotion and work out the problems the crisis has created. Nothing should be done to imply that emotional expression is inappropriate or unmanly.

When more extreme emotional reactions occur, either on a delayed basis or immediately after the crisis, every effort should be made to get the man professional help. Psychotherapy can achieve cures in such cases very rapidly, sometimes after only eight or ten interviews (114). It is important, however, that treatment be instituted as soon as possible. If an actual psychosis develops, the depressive emotion can often be alleviated by electric shock therapy.

If the problem is associated with separation anxiety precipitated by being away from either a wife and children or the parental family, the most immediately successful approach generally is to restore the man to his family as quickly as possible. It is often striking how merely bringing him home can raise the level of effectiveness. Another possible solution is professional treatment to help him adjust to the new job. However, this requires time and may not be feasible as long as he continues to travel. Also, there are many cases where performance is affected but sufficient anxiety is not aroused to motivate the man to seek treatment. Under such conditions a return to the family is the only really appropriate course. If possible, the man should not be told outright that his problem is one of homesickness. In many cases he will be aware of it, but not in all. To imply that he is a "mama's boy" will accomplish little except to undermine further his already shattered self-confidence.

Unfortunately, transfers home are not always easily accomplished. The man may have been assigned to the job no more than a month or so before. In addition, the work may be recognized by the company as unpleasant and thus considered to be a test of fortitude. Many traveling jobs are given to new employees with the understanding that as they prove themselves they will become eligible for less arduous assignments. Similarly, positions in outlying areas or in foreign countries may be allocated on a rotational basis with everyone taking his turn. When placement policies of this kind are in force, it is very difficult to bring a man back before he has put in his time, especially when he has failed to meet the implied test of character. Yet this is the action most likely to restore his performance level and permit effective utilization of his talents within the organization.

However, the greatest managerial problem created by a subordinate who cannot adjust to separation is the financial one. A man who must be returned from a foreign assignment with his family represents a sizable monetary loss to his company. So too does a man who has received extensive training for his new job. Because of the cost factor, the only really satisfactory solution for separation difficulties is their prevention by adequate screening. Only men who will be able to adapt should be selected for jobs involving extensive travel or assignment away from home. This whole problem has not received the concentrated research investigation it deserves, although studies being carried out in connection with the Peace Corps screening program may eventually offer a solution. There are, nevertheless, some useful guides to effective screening.

A man's previous employment history and education can yield valuable clues regarding his reactions to separation. If he has been away from home for military service, college, or prior work and has performed adequately, there is little basis for concern. If there are indications that he has not done well while separated but has maintained a satisfactory work record when living at home, every effort should be made to obtain detailed information regarding his previous failures. Transfer from a college located in another part of the country to one near home, exceptionally short periods of military service, and difficulty in handling sales positions requiring extensive travel often prove indicative of difficulties involving separation.

When the man has spent his whole life in close proximity to his family, however, this type of analysis has limited value, particularly if he is young. There may well have been no special reason for separation to occur. On the other hand, a man in his middle thirties who has never married and has continued to live with his parents quite possibly may experience difficulty in adjusting to separation. Chances are that he has had opportunities to live away from his family and rejected these in favor of his present way of life. Similarly, people who seem quite resistant to travel or who are obviously upset at the prospect of an out-of-town assignment should not be selected. Frequently they will produce a large number of excuses, none of which is really very convincing. Rarely will they admit even to themselves that the very thought of separation makes them anxious.

A supervisory challenge even greater than the problems caused by separation is the case of the man who remains isolated, without close family or friendship ties. If his performance is adequate, which it may well be, there is little justification for managerial action. In addition, such people may remain equally isolated at work, making it difficult for a superior to find out about their lives off the job. Yet anything that can be done to increase participation in group activities may pay off. If the vulnerability of these people can be reduced by providing them with close personal relationships, they are much less likely to suffer subsequent performance failures. There are, of course, limits to what can be accomplished; certainly management should not assume the role of a social introduction service. Anything that might be considered an intrusion into the personal affairs of a satisfactory employee should be avoided. Yet there are some things that can be done. These will be taken up in the following chapter on social factors at the workplace.

In cases where family demands have assumed such a dominant position that job requirements are not fulfilled, the usual approach has been to call the man in for at least one talk and probably for several. He is told that he will have to devote more time and energy to his job, become more cooperative in accepting extra assignments, and stop running home whenever he receives a call. Although these talks generally do no harm and may be a necessary preliminary to more drastic action, they rarely help for more than a brief period. The reason is that the wife or other family member responsible for the demands customarily initiates a similar series of talks. The job and family pressures thus cancel out, and the situation remains unchanged. Contacting family members directly, in the hope of eliciting a more favorable attitude toward the subordinate's job, rarely accomplishes much either. Unless this is initiated with the assistance and approval of the employee himself, it may be expected to do more harm than good because of the resentments it will arouse. Unfortunately, managers are rarely in a position to alter a family situation. As a result it may be impossible to solve this type of problem, and the man may have to be fired. Transfer to another job will accomplish nothing, since the difficulties stem from factors outside the place of work.

Emotional upsets which result from separation and which occur in family members other than the employee present a different problem. There is no particular reason for the company to become directly involved unless there is some effect on performance or a request for transfer. Although these situations present many individual variations, it is still generally true that psychotherapy and psychiatric treatment are more appropriate when severe separation reactions occur in other family members than when they affect the employee himself. If treatment is initiated, the very fact that something is being done about the family situation may eliminate any immediate problems on the job. The time required for cure usually has little significance for the man's performance. Having turned over responsibility for the problem to a qualified practitioner, he will usually feel free to concentrate on his work. Where professional help is not available or feasible and the man's performance is suffering, a decision will, of course, have to be reached about whether to restore family unity through transfer. As a rule, if such a change is made the wife or other family member will become less disturbed and the resulting performance difficulties will be alleviated.

As with separation problems in employees, the ideal way to handle a separation reaction in the rest of the family is to prevent it by screening. Certainly when a company is preparing to invest thousands of dollars in moving a man and his family to a foreign country, it is apporpriate to take every precaution. Some representative of the company should talk to the wife and determine how she feels about the move. Problems of separation should be explored, and if the company has developed special screening devices, these should be employed. Such procedures are entirely appropriate, since they relate directly to matters of performance and organizational objectives. Many large corporations continue to lose sizable sums of money year after year because of the necessity of returning employees to their homes from foreign assignments. Contacts with family members should, of course, always be made with the approval and assistance of the employee.

One of the most difficult aspects of the management of ineffective performance which is attributable to family factors is that the manager may not learn the source of the trouble. Many continuing conflicts and ill nesses at home do not become known to the man's superior for years, if ever. In a typical case, an employee with a lengthy record of job failure remained married to a chronic alcoholic, who over the years was repeatedly hospitalized for her condition. Ashamed of his family problems, the man continued to worry in silence. He retained his job only because his department had a policy that no one should be fired except for disciplinary reasons. Finally, in a period of economic recession this policy was reversed, and the man came up for dismissal. Only then was the alcoholism of his wife brought to the attention of management.

When such problems can be unearthed, it is often possible to take effective action. Subordinates whose performance has been influenced by an emotional disturbance at home can be helped to obtain treatment for the affected person. Young men who have troubles because of conflicts with parents can be offered attractive positions which require them to live away from home. Men whose problems stem from working in close proximity to other family members can be shifted to more distant locations. Striking improvements will almost invariably occur if the diagnosis is correct and if appropriate action is taken soon enough. Accomplishments of this kind can be one of the greatest sources of satisfaction in managerial work.

7

THE GROUPS AT WORK

Just as a man's various family groups may influence his performance on the job, so too may his relationships with people at work. For most people the employment situation contains only one significant group, which consists of all subordinates working under a single supervisor and the supervisor himself. Within management, however, this simplicity is not maintained. The manager is a member both of the group which he directs and of a group containing himself, his immediate superior, and the other managers reporting to that superior. Further complexity is added to work groups by staff personnel and men with rotating assignments, who may become group members for varying periods. In addition, there are instances where organization charts show either more or fewer levels of supervision than actually exist. A man may be listed as in charge of a group but have all his subordinates reporting directly to the person above him. He is in fact only a particularly well-paid member of a group directed by his superior. Such situations are common where direct line assistants are employed. They also occur under certain conditions in large staff departments. In production and clerical units, on the other hand, group leaders and others with work-guidance duties may actually constitute a level of supervision even though it is not formally recognized.

Work groups in the business world have certain special characteristics which condition their influence on the performance of their members. They are, for one thing, constituted primarily on a nonvoluntary basis. It is true that people can resign or sometimes use the threat of resignation to obtain a transfer to another group. But in the initial placement other members of the group are rarely asked for their opinion, and the man himself, although provided with information regarding the job, often knows nothing about the people with whom he will be associated. Similarly, leadership is imposed from outside. The manager is not elected as he might be in a club or political party but selected by individuals external to the group. Although these involuntary aspects may well result in a more effective group than otherwise, they can also have the opposite effect.

Another characteristic of work groups in business is that the extent of the members' association is limited. In contrast to the armed services, for instance, the man in industry usually remains with his group for only a part of the day and is separated from it over the weekend. Close contact with families tends to be maintained, and other stable social relationships exist as well. Thus, groups at work do not have the crucial significance they might otherwise possess.

These distinctive aspects will be frequently in evidence during the discussion of ways in which groups at work may become strategic for ineffective performance. The initial section will focus on the degree to which there is a sense of emotional closeness or cohesion and on how this may contribute to the failure of individual members or even of the group as a whole. Although a lack of cohesion may introduce many managerial problems, its presence can also be a source of trouble. Next, the behavior of the man in charge of the group and the ways in which he may contribute to ineffectiveness will be discussed. A considerable body of research has developed in this area, but the findings do not always fit neatly together. An attempt will be made to introduce some integrating concepts which, although admittedly rough, should make it easier to apply the research results to practical problems of performance. A special section will be devoted to the inappropriate criteria and standards which some managers employ in reaching decisions on ineffectiveness. This is the case of ineffectiveness by definition only, which was mentioned briefly in Chapter 1. Finally, as in preceding chapters, the last section will take up the techniques and approaches that can be used to achieve an effective level of performance.

The Cohesion of the Group

Although much has been written about the characteristics and functioning of groups, no attempt will be made to provide a comprehensive review of this material. In many instances it has limited relevance for the study of performance, being concerned with such matters as how groups select their leaders, establish their goals, provide for communication among members, etc. The reader who would like information on research in the general area of group dynamics can easily find it in the more technical reviews of the literature (115, 118, 138).

The matter of cohesion, however, is directly relevant for our purposes. Groups differ markedly in the extent to which they function as a unit. In some, the members want to be with each other. They experience a sense of emotional closeness which makes them stick together even when external pressures are working toward dismemberment of the group. In others, although a group exists in a formal sense, it is really nothing more than a collection of individuals. No particular unity of behavior exists. The members go their own ways with little sense of pride in their group and little reason to prefer their present associations to others that might become available.

The presence of cohesion in a group need not result from an identity of motives among the members, but all must have some desire or need which makes the group attractive. Some may see the process of association with certain individuals as providing a source of pleasure. They anticipate happiness in connection with social interaction and so are drawn to the others. Various types of negative motivation may also operate. One series of studies indicates that attractions can derive from a desire to avoid or reduce fear or from a wish to evaluate one's own feelings in a disturbing situation (134).

Where the group contains many members who are not either positively or negatively motivated toward social relationships, cohesion will of course be at a minimum. Similarly, if the group consistently fails to provide what is desired, it will become unattractive to its members, and only a collection of individuals will remain. A group will not necessarily lack cohesion just because it is geographically dispersed and unable to gather except on rare occasions. Some sales groups maintain a high degree of cohesion in spite of the fact that the members meet infrequently. The crucial factors are the predominance of certain kinds of social motives and the capacity of the group to provide emotionally for its members.

It is appropriate to ask whether from a managerial viewpoint this type of closeness and emotional unity is desirable. It has often been assumed that too much cohesiveness will provide a fertile ground for organizing attempts and union activity. Therefore, it has been argued, individualism rather than group consciousness should be encouraged. This viewpoint appears to be valid under some circumstances. But there is additional evidence suggesting that management may benefit in certain important respects when cohesiveness and a sense of pride exist in its work groups.

Cohesive groups are by their very nature resistant to disintegration. Because people in such groups want to be with the others, separations are likely to be at a minimum and absenteeism low. In contrast, where cohesion is lacking there is a built-in potential for conflict and disruption. Members have little to prevent them from bickering, and under extreme conditions the result may be almost total dissolution. Although the unit remains on the organization chart, its makeup changes drastically as old members leave and replacements are hired. Sometimes the group does disappear completely as a result of a reorganization. Torn by strife, it is in no position to demonstrate its value to the organization. This is most likely to happen to certain specialized staff groups which often find it difficult to show a definite monetary contribution.

Aside from such total abolition, however, a lack of cohesion will generally result in group dissolution only when alternative positions are readily available to the members. Units containing a high proportion of staff specialists, technicians, and others with skills which are in demand and easily transferable are particularly vulnerable. University departments are traditionally subject to this effect. So too are certain research and development groups in industry. In some of these the turnover rates can become unbelievably high.

Cohesiveness can also provide a valuable antidote to emotional disturbance. Some employees are able to maintain an adequate emotional adjustment, and thus a satisfactory level of performance, only because of the support they receive from fellow workers. Some are helped through crisis situations which might otherwise have been severely disruptive. It has already been noted that the vulnerability of the isolated person is mitigated by close social relationships. Physically handicapped and somewhat intellectually deficient individuals may also be helped by fellow members of a cohesive group. Such assistance will be lacking in a group where everyone operates as an individual with little concern for other members. In the cohesive group specialized job knowledge will be shared, and sometimes new members will receive help with their work during the learning period. If the work is emotionally demanding, the support of close group relationships can be crucial for all members. In military combat, for example, buddy and squad ties are often instrumental in maintaining performance. Similar effects are evident in dangerous industrial work.

Although the relationships between cohesion and the quality and quantity of performance are complex, one consequence is evident. The cohesive group is much more likely to respond effectively to emergency work demands. In such a situation some members will work because of pride in their group and other such positive motives; others will work because they wish to avoid being condemned for not doing their share. Where unity is lacking, some members will respond to emergency demands but others may not. Group pressures will not operate, and the total effort will be less. Thus the manager who can rely on the unifying effects of group pride and teamwork has a distinct advantage in meeting special production schedules.

It is evident, however, that cohesion within a group need not result in continuing high levels of productivity. Enough instances of so-called restriction of output have now been studied to make it clear that employees can band together to keep production down (141). In fact, it is through their sense of unity that they are able to exercise negative sanctions against wayward members who may attempt to rise above accepted standards of output. Laboratory studies (116) indicate that very cohesive groups will develop high levels of production if increased output becomes a group goal. But if low group standards are imposed, output falls off sharply. In noncohesive groups, standards of this kind have no long-term effect at all.

Clearly the cohesive group has a potential for both very high and very low levels of effectiveness. In any case, output will tend to be uniform throughout the group (135). In contrast, less cohesive groups will display a much greater range in performance. The effect of cohesive group pressures and assistance may well be that many who might otherwise fail because of individual strategic factors, especially those of a motivational and emotional nature, are pulled above a minimally satisfactory level. On the other hand, where for some reason the group is in opposition to company objectives, a great many members may be pushed into ineffectiveness. Performance may also drop to rather low levels when the cohesive group is not given any reason to set adequate output standards —that is, when there is a general aura of happiness, friendliness, and overpermissiveness permeating the organization. This subject will be taken up at some length in Chapter 8.

There is reason to believe that strong cohesiveness and group pride are more likely to result in above-average output than in the opposite. In the majority of cases team spirit of this kind appears to be a deterrent to large-scale ineffectiveness within the group (130). This is particularly true when the members feel a sense of security and trust in the company —when they have a favorable attitude toward their superiors and the firm, and see company representatives, and not the union, as the major source of assistance in time of difficulty (135). Similarly, under these conditions of trust and security, strikes and slowdowns will be at a minimum. It is when group members have a negative attitude toward the company and distrust its representatives that strong cohesion is likely to be coupled with low group performance. It is then that an excessive number of ineffective performers emerge.

Apparently, there are certain circumstances which tend to foster group cohesiveness and others which almost guarantee that it will be lacking. Many are outside the control of the individual manager. There are real limitations on what can be done to influence the degree of closeness within a group once the membership has been established. One writer (117) has suggested several conditions for cohesion, and a number of these have received the support of research evidence. Among them is the suggestion that a group containing primarily skilled workers will tend to be cohesive—a proposal which, research indicates, can be generalized to cover occupational prestige as a whole. The more generally esteemed the jobs within a group, the more probable it is that team spirit and pride will develop (135).

Cohesion can also be expected where the work is performed in a relatively small and long-established community. A recent study of warehousing operations in the McKesson and Robbins Company revealed that both overall employee satisfaction and the quantity of work produced were higher in small-town locations (128). It seems probable that the heterogeneity of large urban populations tends to reduce the likelihood of cohesion. Certainly under such conditions negative attitudes toward the company are more apt to appear. Thus when cohesiveness does occur in large-city groups, there is a better chance that it will be associated with low output standards.

Casual and part-time workers also serve as a potential deterrent to emotional closeness. When the group contains many employees who come and go as a result of seasonal or other demands, unity is disrupted. Frequent layoffs would appear to have the same effect. Some stability of membership is a necessary condition for cohesion. Research indicates that the presence of a large number of long-service employees tends to be associated with a high level of cohesiveness (135).

Married employees may be expected to contribute similarly to the closeness of a group. Marriage imposes a certain degree of stability on people because of the increased responsibility and the need for maintaining continued employment. Age does not seem to be a crucial factor, except that older women often form rather cohesive groups. In many cases they are attracted to the work situation by the opportunity for social interaction which is no longer available at home.

Other factors contributing to cohesiveness have also been suggested (142). In each instance it has been assumed that homogeneity within the group is essential. This assumption has received considerable research support from studies conducted outside the business world (115). When the members are of the same sex and have similar jobs, ethnic affiliations, and social class backgrounds, conditions appear particularly favorable for the formation of a unified group. Of course these factors, like those previously noted, are often entirely beyond the control of the manager. Labor market conditions and many other considerations may well take precedence over the matter of maximizing the chances for cohesion.

It has already been noted that under certain conditions cohesion can contribute to a high incidence of ineffectiveness. Unfortunately, this does not complete the story. There are also cases where it is directly responsible for failure. Studies make it clear that cohesive groups are capable of rejecting and ostracizing individuals who are in some way deviant (118). The process can be observed in experimental situations where nonconformity is artificially created. Such rejection may have no impact on performance, of course. In fact, there are conditions under which it may increase effectiveness: The man may be freed of the control imposed by low group standards and may rise to a much higher level of productivity. On other occasions, however, the negative impact of ostracism is sizable. Strong social motives are suddenly frustrated, with the result that the man either gives up in his efforts to achieve satisfactions through job-integrated means or responds with emotional reactions which are detrimental to performance. It is not uncommon for a person to become so worried and upset about his relationship to the group that he cannot concentrate on his work at all. Or he may spend all his time trying to figure out ways of getting group acceptance. Turnover among such people is likely to be high.

The bases for rejection are many. The man may have unpopular opinions or a personality which is not pleasing to the others. He may be a known homosexual or have a prison record. He may come from a different socioeconomic or ethnic background. The writer knows of one case in which a company experimented with hiring young management trainees in a certain department. The new college graduates were rotated from assignment to assignment so that they could learn the various aspects of the business and thus qualify themselves for promotion into responsible positions. Yet within three years all but one of a sizable original group had left the company, and that one was working in another department. The management trainees had been consistently ostracized by the existing lower and middle management organization. Considered a group of young "prima donnas," they were denied access to information and treated much as school children treat a teacher's pet. Some quit because they realized they were getting nowhere. Others were so upset by their unexpected reception that they never did attain acceptable performance levels and eventually were fired.

Actually, something very similar happens whenever a new member is introduced into a cohesive work group. There is a period of mutual evaluation during which the man, although usually treated cordially, is made to feel very much an outsider. In most cases the new man decides he wants to be accepted by the group long before the group comes to a similar conclusion regarding him. The group's need for a member is not nearly as strong as the new man's need for the group. He may receive help with his work in order to ensure that the accepted performance standards are maintained, but he will be left out of many other activities. Some men, inexperienced in such matters, never recover from the effects of this initial cold shoulder. Most companies refrain from evaluating an employee on anything but a tentative basis for the first three to six months, because they assume that he may require a certain amount of practice to reach a satisfactory performance level. However, this is not the only factor contributing to performance deficiencies in a new man. He is also working under conditions of at least partial ostracism and is likely to be devoting his time and thought to ways of gaining group acceptance. He cannot concentrate on his work to the extent that would be possible if these social problems had been solved.

In certain firms a number of utility workers are employed who are rotated from group to group in accordance with changing work loads, vacation schedules, disability leaves, and the like. They never stay in one place very long, and no one expects them to settle into any group on a permanent basis. As a result they are always "new men" and subject to ostracism. Some people like the challenge involved and respond well to it. But for those to whom group membership and acceptance is important, it is very disturbing. Some potentially effective workers are incapable of handling rotating assignments for this reason.

Occasionally, the shoe is on the other foot and a man actively rejects his fellow workers. This need not have a negative effect on his performance. When a negative effect does occur, however, motivational factors are commonly involved. Usually the man feels ashamed of his association with the others or considers the group members reprehensible in some respect. He wants badly to get away from the whole situation and attempts to deny any relationship with the other men. Status considerations often figure strongly in his motivational hierarchy. Disturbed, and perhaps ashamed of his group, he is also deprived of the opportunity for assistance that integration might have provided. In addition, pressures to attain standards of work output acceptable to the others will have no effect on him. Because he is upset and because he considers good work in such a social context not worth striving for, he may fail.

Another type of problem arises not because of rejection, but because of unfortunate side effects of acceptance. A cohesive group is protective of its members and above all else, loyal. This loyalty may be misplaced from a managerial viewpoint and from the man's, too. The characteristic difficulty in identifying alcoholic subordinates has already been discussed. Similar protective efforts may occur in any case where a man's performance has declined and the group members believe he is in danger of being fired if discovered. Out of the best intentions, the others may cover up for someone who is almost incapable of performing his duties. They may well do much of his work for him. Many cases of severe emotional disorder have gone undetected and untreated for this reason. Aside from any disadvantages for the company, this type of misplaced loyalty can result in accidents, suicide, unnecessary prolongation of illnesses, and death due to alcoholism. The consequences for the man himself can be severe.

Another such side effect of cohesion will be covered in more detail in the following section. This is the group pressures which may be exerted on those with managerial responsibilities to place the objectives of the group above those of the organization. As a result the manager himself may become so immersed in protecting certain of his subordinates that he does nothing to restore them to effective performance. As in all cases of misplaced group loyalty, the group's cohesiveness thus generates pressures which contribute to individual failure. In a less cohesive group the same manager, free of concerted appeals to his loyalty, might feel able to take appropriate action with his subordinates.

A cohesive group may, of course, have effects on its members similar to the effects of the family which were discussed in Chapter 6, although, because groups at work are less close emotionally, such cases are rare. Sometimes severe physical illnesses will set off anxiety neuroses among fellow workers. A fatal heart attack is particularly likely to provoke such conditions (137). Although these emotional disorders often differ in both content and causation from the crisis reactions described in Chapter 6, some are very similar. Separation from a work group may also precipitate emotional and motivational disturbances, although this is rare. Industrial work groups do not ordinarily maintain close associations long enough to take on a role similar to the family. Military groups, on the other hand, with their twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week relationships, often do.

Ineffective Management

The manager cannot restrict his search for the causes of failure to the specific employee, the man's family, and other subordinates at the workplace. It may well be that he himself is the strategic factor. This means that in carrying out a performance analysis, those with supervisory responsibilities must look at the nature of their own influence on people under them. It is evident that without being aware of it, a manager can act so as to reinforce subordinate behavior which is not integrated with the job. He may, for instance, want above all else to foster high levels of performance in his group, but consistently recommend men for promotion on the basis of seniority (126). His subordinates will easily recognize that they can get ahead as fast with poor performance as with superior, but the manager may find it harder to see the inconsistency between his intentions and his behavior. Recognizing one's own contributions to ineffectiveness is probably the most difficult aspect of performance analysis.

What kinds of managerial actions can become strategic for the failure of a subordinate? The question is not easily answered, although much research has been devoted to it. This section will review the general results of such studies, some of which may be familiar to the reader, and then return to the basic question.

The most extensive investigations have been conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan over the past fifteen years in a variety of firms, including the Prudential Insurance Company, the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, the Caterpillar Tractor Company, and the Detroit Edison Company (127, 130). One finding was that groups led by managers who spend most of their time doing nonsupervisory tasks are likely to have an excess of low producers. The factory supervisor who is frequently seen operating a machine alongside his men and the accounting manager who consistently pitches in and helps with routine paper work do not have time to plan the work of their units, perform special technical tasks, provide materials for their men, observe the performance of the group, and motivate their subordinates. Certainly they cannot devote the necessary energy to performance analysis. They abdicate from the leadership role, and their groups are usually less effective.

A second type of behavior which tended to reduce productivity was very close supervision. Some degree of delegation, permitting subordinates the freedom to carry out tasks in their own way, is apparently desirable in stimulating effective performance. If a manager hovers over his man giving them detailed and frequently repeated instructions regarding every aspect of their work, he will almost invariably produce some performance failures.

Similarly, and this may be the same man, some superiors in the studies seemed to have little concern for their people as human beings. Such men give the impression to those under them that they do not care whether their subordinates live or die as long as the work gets out. They maintain an unreasonable pressure for production without any resort to ordinary kindness. It is presumably this last factor, and not the emphasis on work standards per se, which contributes to the relatively poor performance of their groups. Managers of this type are very unpopular. They take a punitive attitude whenever a mistake is made, do not train their subordinates for better jobs, rarely praise anyone, exhibit no interest in talking over problems, and tend to neglect any special requests their men may make of them. In short they are rather unpleasant people to deal with, at least insofar as the work situation is concerned. This kind of disagreeableness from a person in a position of authority can be very upsetting to some people. It can make subordinates terribly angry or scared, or it can leave them so lacking in appropriate motivation that they are incapable of satisfactory work.

The significance of the last two findings from the University of Michigan research is dramatized by the results of another study which dealt with the reasons for breakdown in ninety-one cases among industrial employees (137). The patients ranged from unskilled workers to vice-presidents. Fifty-four percent of the disorders were attributable to extended exposure to the kind of supervision described above. These individuals worked for supervisors who constantly demanded and never praised, who shouted at their men, who were sarcastic and abusive, who often employed ridicule, and who checked on every detail of performance, usually with continuing criticism.

A fourth conclusion from the University of Michigan studies suggests, however, that the manager who has none of these faults will still gain little from his efforts unless he can exercise some influence with his own superiors. If he cannot get support for his actions up the line, a manager is unlikely to make much difference in his group. Being a kind person who has the interests of his men at heart will not alone enable him to assume leadership and influence productivity. A promised change in work standards which never occurs, a merit increase which is cut in half at higher levels, an attempted addition to staff which never materializes —these only demonstrate to the group that the boss cannot be of much help.

Such situations frequently develop because the man in charge makes no attempt to exert influence up the line. He fails to make a case for his viewpoint and suffers the consequences. But the studies also indicate that the manager who is himself closely supervised, who is rigidly controlled from above, is much more likely to have an unproductive group than the manager who is permitted more freedom to take actions which make a difference to his men. Probably the same can be said for union control. Where the union has been permitted to assume many normal supervisory responsibilities, and where it exerts so much influence over first line supervisors that they have little power of their own left, the supervisors become nonentities to their subordinates. They have not abdicated the leadership role; it has been taken away from them through a series of historical events—contract negotiations, arbitration awards, committee meetings, grievance settlements, the weight of established practice.

The fifth factor observed in the University of Michigan studies is obvious from what has already been said. The manager must assume an active leadership role if he is to have any impact on the productivity of his men. If he does not but rather adopts a passive, laissez-faire attitude, he will be ignored and anything he might do to counteract performance failure is wasted. Other forces in the group will determine performance levels, and a major influence for effectiveness will be lost.

Questions similar to those employed in the Michigan studies have been used in another research project at Ohio State University. As a result of detailed statistical analyses the Ohio State investigators concluded that the behavior of managers in relation to their subordinates can be adequately described in terms of only two factors or dimensions. Although there were exceptions, in general the managers with the least effective work groups were those who rated below average in both dimensions (136, 139).

The studies indicate that men who are inconsiderate of their subordinates are very likely to have a negative effect on them. Such managers are overdemanding and excessively critical. They "ride" their subordinates, fail to consult them about things before acting, and refuse to accept suggestions or explain their actions. They rarely do favors for their men or look out for their personal welfare. They do not have time to listen to their problems. In short, they appear completely unconcerned about the feelings of the people around them.

The second dimension deals more specifically with the matter of getting the work out. The manager who does not accept his responsibility in this respect usually has a poor group. He puts little emphasis on following regulations and maintaining standards of performance, and gives the impression of being just one more member of the group. Since he does not accept a leadership role, he rarely assigns work to anyone or takes a definite position on anything. Planning is neglected, and there is little concern with organizing the work of the group to accomplish company objectives.

Although such a failure to accept the managerial role can be expected to result in a number of subordinates falling below acceptable quantity and quality standards, there is evidence from other research that the effects on turnover may be favorable. Also, grievances are likely to decrease under such conditions (122). Thus, when we note that effectiveness is generally reduced by the essential abdication of the manager, what amounts to a weighted average of all aspects of performance is implied. Any specific aspect may be affected quite differently.

The reader may have noted the rough similarity between these findings and those of the University of Michigan studies. The first factor described by the Michigan researchers sounds very much like a failure to accept the managerial role. The man spends most of his time doing exactly the same work as his subordinates. The second and third factors, too close supervision and a lack of concern for subordinates, seem similar to what the Ohio State people describe as a lack of consideration. The fourth factor, involving as it does the capacity to exercise influence up the line and gain support for one's actions, certainly requires an active acceptance of the managerial role. So too does exerting influence and making a difference in the work group itself.

Comparison shows that the findings from the University of Michigan and Ohio State investigations have much in common. The Ohio State studies, employing somewhat more refined questionnaire techniques, reduced the number of strategic factors from five to two, but the conclusions are roughly similar. Other independent research efforts have resulted in parallel findings. Studies at the International Harvester Company conducted by Purdue University psychologists yielded evidence of a very high relationship between scores on a questionnaire administered to members of fourteen work groups and the productivity of the groups (129). The questionnaire appears to have measured managerial considerateness primarily. Thus, once again a lack of concern for subordinates is found associated with reduced effectiveness.

In another study, conducted at a United States Steel Company plant by University of Illinois psychologists, a manager's ability and willingness to discriminate between good and poor workers was found to be closely related to the productivity of open-hearth shops (119, 121). Those in charge of the less effective groups tended to describe good workers they had known in the past in much the same terms as they described poor workers. They did not make the discriminations on the basis of performance effectiveness that supervisory work seems to call for. Rather, they exhibited feelings of closeness, acceptance, and warmth even toward those who were performance failures. Such people might be expected to avoid establishing and maintaining work standards or assigning duties. They are too close to their men, too much "one of the boys." In essence, they have difficulty in assuming a managerial role.

In general, these studies have dealt with managerial actions which decrease the effectiveness of a group as a whole. It seems safe to assume that in most cases the less productive groups will have more ineffective performers. Certainly anyone who has had experience in dealing with performance problems in industry has seen many cases where either a manager's neglect of his responsibilities or his lack of consideration has proved strategic for failure.

When management members do not accept their role in the organization, when they do not organize and coordinate the work of their subordinates, a number of consequences almost invariably follow. Many of these occur whether the managerial deficiency is attributable entirely to the man himself, or results largely from overcontrol from above (by higher management) or below (by the union). One such consequence is that performance analyses are generally not made and acted upon. This lack of action is particularly unfortunate in cases where motivational factors are strategic. In such circumstances, as was noted in Chapter 4, active intervention on the part of the manager is usually required if performance levels are to be raised. The manager must take steps to frustrate unintegrated behavior, establish standards, and provide satisfactions within the job context. A group which is under the supervision of a man who does not perform his role is likely to contain a high proportion of people who are failing because of motivational problems.

Another consequence of a manager's failure to accept leadership is that decisions preliminary to organizing the work of the group are apt to be neglected. Many such managers feel uncomfortable about reaching conclusions on their own and assuming responsibility for errors of judgment. Accordingly they spend long periods of time collecting the opinions of others. If unanimity cannot be obtained, they put off the decision indefinitely. They want everyone to agree, so that the blame for failure can be shared with as many people as possible (124). Validity of decision thus becomes distinctly secondary to the matter of obtaining agreement.

Because groups at work almost always feel the need for some direction, in these circumstances of managerial abdication an informal leader will usually emerge. Such a person may or may not be capable of leadership; he may only be the oldest, or the most vociferous. In any event, he is unlikely to have a primary commitment to organizational goals. Furthermore, he lacks access to formal channels of communication, and it is very difficult for him to represent the group upward or to exert influence in the larger organization. The result can be chaos, with the whole group falling below acceptable standards of performance.

Informal leadership need not, of course, be caused only by managerial abdication. It can also develop whenever the objectives of the group become too divergent from those of management. Any time a manager refuses to take into account important desires of his subordinates, and to satisfy them at least partially, he runs the risk of having to deal with a group member who has been selected to champion these motives. Union representation may be expected to arise out of just such a disparity between group and managerial objectives. The shop steward, originally an informal leader, has now achieved a more formal status, and with it the very real possibility that he may represent the goals of international unionism far more than the goals of the workers themselves. The result can be the development of still another system of informal leadership designed to represent the group against both management and the union.

Probably one of the major reasons why the inconsiderate manager so often has a relatively unproductive group is that his behavior frustrates important desires for a sense of dignity and freedom from anxiety. Certainly people who are strongly motivated to achieve acceptance and attention from their superiors are very likely to become ineffective under a critical and rejecting manager. In such cases informal leadership arises largely to serve a protective function. Even if it succeeds in this, however, it may be at the expense of any group concern for effective performance.

The inconsiderate manager may also contribute to performance failure as a result of taking a stereotyped view of the appropriate methods for handling people whose work is unsatisfactory. If, as so often happens, he assumes that all the men need is a little more discipline and knocking into shape, he may occasionally succeed, because some people do become ineffective as a consequence of motivational problems which are responsive to discipline and the enforcement of standards. Much more frequently he will fail and at the same time turn a mild anxiety into a severe neurosis or superimpose an emotional disturbance on an existing intellectual inadequacy. Corrective action which does not take the causes of failure into account is detrimental not only to the individual but many times to the company as well.

Failure by Managerial Definition and the Use of Inappropriate Criteria

Since ineffectiveness is after all basically a matter of managerial or organizational definition, there is always the possibility that the cause of failure may be imbedded in the evaluative process. The leadership of the group may be strategic, not because of actions taken or not taken by the man in charge, but because of the way in which the judgment has been reached. Standards may be set so high that they are almost impossible to achieve: A man may be expected to complete a report or produce a quantity of work in an unrealistically short time. Similarly, criteria may be employed which have no connection with performance as defined here: A man may be considered unsatisfactory on the basis of evaluations which do not relate to organizational objectives. Thus, either inappropriate standards or inappropriate criteria may be used to establish ineffectiveness by definition only.

Since inappropriate criteria present the greatest difficulty, the discussion will concentrate on this area. Factors such as the degree of emotional stability, racial or ethnic background, physical attractiveness, alcoholic consumption, religion, manner of dress, social standing, treatment of wife and children, extent of conformity, pleasantness of personality, and many others, do on occasion appear in connection with evaluations. Some are specifically included in management appraisal forms and guides to employee rating; others, because of legal and ethical considerations, are unlikely to be stated in writing, but nevertheless influence judgments.

The greater the number of factors employed to establish ineffectiveness, the greater the number of employees who will be labeled problem workers. If a firm uses many criteria which have no relation to organizational objectives, the effort, energy, and expense required to deal with the resulting ineffectiveness will detract from the performance of other functions. A company cannot afford to have a high percentage of management's time devoted to problems of ineffectiveness which actually are not associated with profitability. Firing those who show evidence of failing on these nonrelevant bases is not necessarily a solution. As noted in Chapter 1, firing is costly, may restrict the available labor market for hiring purposes, and is often impossible for legal or other reasons.

Furthermore, there is an ethical issue here similar to one raised by William H. Whyte in his book *The Organization Man* (143). In our society it is generally held that aspects of behavior and thought which are not within the domain of work performance should not serve as a basis for judging a man as an employee. Such matters are, in fact, considered "none of the company's business" by a large segment of the population. Consequently, if a firm attempts to utilize these inappropriate criteria, it may well stir up considerable bitterness and anger among employees. Although there may be times when it is necessary to risk precipitating discontent within an organization, it seems doubtful that the attempt to introduce inappropriate criteria should be one of these. Most good managers do not take that kind of risk; they have nothing to gain in terms of profitability and everything to lose.

These strictures are *not* meant to imply that a manager should never take emotional stability, manner of dress, and similar characteristics into account in reaching decisions on ineffective performance. Such factors may in fact be strategic for performance failure in one or more of the four dimensions named in Chapter 1: quality of work, quantity, time spent on the job, and cooperation with others in attaining organizational goals. If so, they are legitimate causal factors contributing to a type of performance which is detrimental to company objectives. They become inappropriate only when they have no relationship to actual performance.

This distinction is an important one, since it is easy to fuse the idea of a good person or a friend with that of a good worker, and the idea of a bad person or an enemy with that of a poor worker. People tend to make global judgments of this kind unless they train themselves to be sensitive to the differences between their own goals and those of the firm. A manager may dislike a group or a specific person, he may wish to have nothing to do with people of a certain kind, or he may even wish to harm them in some way. But if he should substitute these personal goals for those of the company and, on the basis of nonrelevant factors, define the group or individual as ineffective, he runs the risk of becoming considerably less effective himself. This is not merely a subject for debate on ethical grounds. It is a matter with practical implications for the operation of a business.

The crucial element—that is, whether or not the criteria are relevant to any of the four dimensions of performance effectiveness—is often difficult to establish. It is easy for a manager to convince himself that some behavior or characteristic of a person *might* be related to performance, or that it *could* have a negative effect on the firm. Yet bases for valid decision making do exist in this area. For one thing, the supervisor can profit by the results of research. The evidence presented in Chapter 3, for instance, demonstrates that emotional instability or disturbance does not necessarily produce ineffective performance. The manager who has a personal distaste for unstable people can, by keeping this evidence in mind, use it to keep his subjective preferences from dominating his judgment.

For another thing, the sizable backlog of experience which a manager develops over the years permits commonsense solutions to questions of the appropriateness of criteria. If a man is heard to make derogatory statements about the company to a group of coworkers, for example, there is a good chance that he is engaging in the age-old custom of griping—a custom which has become almost institutionalized in military organizations. He probably neither intends, nor has, a negative effect on his company. Experienced managers know that this kind of "disloyalty" is rarely related to performance. There are circumstances under which it *might* be, and under certain conditions it *could* even be an appropriate basis for considering a man totally ineffective, but these would be exceptions rather than the rule. The man's superior may be angered by the derogatory statements and even develop an intense dislike as a result. In such cases, however, the anger and dislike are usually precipitated by the man's failure to behave in accordance with his superior's personal goals. This differs considerably from a failure to behave in accordance with organizational goals. The key question remains: Is there evidence that the behavior had sufficient negative impact on performance to justify labeling the man a failure?

To take an example in which there does exist a relationship to performance, suppose that a man engaged in the production of delicate instruments has a high breakage rate and a poor record for quality. If investigation reveals that his periods of poor performance tend to occur when he has been drinking on the job, alcoholic consumption might legitimately be viewed as a contributory factor in the failure even though the man never becomes intoxicated. Management is generally considered justified in forbidding employees to bring liquor onto company property because of just such an eventuality. On the other hand, if a man were to get drunk at a private party attended by several other employees of the company, there is little probability that alcoholic consumption, even in this more extreme form, could be related to job performance.

Characteristics of individuals and their behavior which have no real relation to performance often come up in connection with promotion, as well as performance evaluation. Either the person is not promoted because of some such factor, or he is told that if he wants to progress in the company, he will have to change. Again, this is appropriate if a relationship to performance is present. There is no reason why an organization should put people in responsible positions on any basis other than the fact that they will contribute to company objectives. For instance, it is inconsistent with the role of business enterprise in our society to expect a firm, purely out of humanitarian motives, to promote a member of a minority group to a high-level position when better-qualified people are available. On the other hand, it is equally inappropriate to refuse promotion to a competent person on the basis of minority-group membership. Yet sometimes such decisions are made. In one case a man resigned from his job when he was led to believe that he could never progress in his company because of his religion. Subsequently, after a long and distinguished career in government, he was rehired at a fee well above the going rate as the same company's major consultant on industry problems. In retrospect there seems little question that if actual performance had been the sole criterion, this man could have reached a very high level in his company and made a major contribution to its success.

Although a great variety of factors irrelevant to performances may be employed in making promotions, the worst offender in this respect is probably seniority. At the level of the represented employee, companies have in many instances been forced by the unions to accept seniority, or else they have found it so difficult to prove that merit differences exist between candidates that the seniority principle has in practice been applied. Unions have traditionally made every effort to implement seniority, because it is consistent with their organizational goals. To the extent that merit operates as a criterion and the man who is likely to perform most effectively is chosen, there exists a possibility that individual bargaining may reassert itself over collective action and the union thereby lose control of jobs and members alike.

Where unions have succeeded in establishing the principle of seniority, either through contract or by established practice, they have clearly achieved their goals at the expense of the company. If promotions are consistently based on length of service, profitability will inevitably be reduced from what it might have been with performance potential as the criterion. A larger number of ineffective performers will be placed in the more responsible positions.

Although promotion by seniority may be unavoidable today in jobs under union jurisdiction, this is only part of the problem. The fact is that many firms apply seniority in the promotion of nonrepresented employees and even of those well up into management. In doing so a company not only ensures an unnecessarily high incidence of ineffectiveness, but also discourages younger employees who may believe themselves capable of progressing at a more rapid rate than seniority would permit.

Just as the application of inappropriate criteria causes some people to be barred from promotion and others to be defined as ineffective, it excludes still others from employment entirely. Sex, race, nationality, religion, age, and similar factors are sometimes used to screen out "undesirables." Where these factors are known to be closely related to job performance, they should of course be used as criteria. It is the essence of our economic system that a firm not only can, but should, employ practices which will increase the effectiveness of its work force, and thus contribute to successful competition for profits. For instance, it is quite appropriate to bar females and applicants of advanced age from consideration for positions requiring heavy manual labor—at least, under normal labor-force conditions where more physically capable young men can be hired.

On the other hand, such criteria are sometimes used to guide employment practices when there is no evidence of a relationship to job performance. Physical characteristics and certain idiosyncrasies of grooming and dress are particularly likely to receive undue emphasis. This procedure not only puts unnecessary restrictions on the size of the labor force from which the company must select employees, but also in some instances introduces the possibility that legal controls and product boycotts will be invoked. It is usually difficult enough to find employees who have the potential for really effective performance without eliminating many of these at the outset by using inappropriate criteria. In addition, the fair employment practices laws, which exist in some states and cities, and certain provisions regulating employment in connection with Federal contracts make discrimination in employment a risk even though these laws are difficult to enforce. More deleterious in recent years have been the boycotts organized by different consumer groups. Certain Negro organizations in particular have sometimes precipitated a sizable decrease in the sales of offending firms.

It has, of course, often been assumed that a change in hiring policy in response to these considerations and pressures would disturb the existing employees to the point where many might become ineffective. This is a real problem and should not be brushed off lightly. As noted previously, the fourth dimension in which performance may be evaluated involves the influence a man may have on the performance of coworkers. A member of a minority group, for instance, might well be judged ineffective if other employees were sufficiently disquieted by his presence to permit their work to suffer.

Experience indicates, however, that this is not common. People may become upset and may even give considerable expression to their feelings, but few will behave over a long period in a manner which would make their own dismissal a real possibility. Widespread performance decrement is likely only when management indicates that there is no possibility of dismissal—that no one will be fired if he becomes ineffective because of open hostility to a new employee. Parallel situations occurred in several states when their governors removed sanctions by announcing that school integration would precipitate such violence that the state would not have power to control it. When sanctions are withdrawn or made ineffective, considerable conflict can break out and deflect employees from organizational goals for long periods.

Such scientific evidence as is available tends to support these positive conclusions, although there is likely to be some reduction in group cohesiveness. In one study an organization which had experienced considerable internal resistance to the hiring of older women was subsequently found to accept the practice with a minimum of difficulty and decrement in performance (131). During the Korean War the Army dropped its policy of segregation with, from all reports, a considerable increase in overall efficiency (125). Provided that the members are sufficiently dedicated to organizational goals and that adequate sanctions are maintained, it seems clear that a company can hire employees from groups which are the object of considerable negative feeling. A short-term drop in overall performance is a real possibility, but this will usually be brief. Reduced cohesiveness may continue, however, in some instances. If this should be the case, the possibility that some indirect negative consequences may occur at a later date cannot be completely ruled out. Turnover can increase and some positive effects of cohesion may be lost.

Inducing a Positive Group Impact on Performance

It has been noted that in general group cohesiveness appears to be desirable, but that many of the factors which contribute to it are likely to be outside managerial control. Although the lack of such a sense of emotional closeness need not necessarily be detrimental, groups without it are sometimes plagued by bickering and conflict, as well as excessive and rapid turnover. Under such conditions overall productivity may well be low and the incidence of ineffectiveness (on motivational grounds alone) rather high. Such effects are most easily counteracted by putting together people who are likely to be friendly, who have strong motives leading them to seek social activity, and who are attracted to the specific work group by some characteristic of it (such as high status, challenging work, etc.). In addition, reducing the size of the group and treating the membership as a single unit tend to increase cohesiveness (118). Meetings, actions regarding pay, and other managerial procedures which are applied only to the individuals in a given group and not to other members of the organization can be used to circumscribe the group and increase its cohesion. Also, there is evidence that industrial groups whose members see themselves as under attack from some external source will tend to minimize individual competitive activities and draw together (79).

Some of these procedures, such as increasing the number of meetings, are activities which the manager himself can institute. Others require higher-level approval or cannot be purposefully accomplished at all. In many cases cohesiveness as an objective must remain secondary to other concerns. Sometimes it is impossible to put together people with the requisite job skills who are also sufficiently alike to guarantee an emotionally close relationship. If a lack of cohesion leads to constant dissension, however, and it is clear that the man in charge is not directly responsible for this state of affairs, it may be necessary to reconstitute the group through mass shifts of personnel. The self-conscious reshuffling of work associations to put people who might be expected to get along with each other in the same units has not, to the writer's knowledge, been employed extensively in any kind of organization. Yet it does offer a potential solution to the problem of the continually strife-torn group. Many athletic coaches have employed the technique with considerable success.

Cohesion, although desirable, is only half the problem, however. As has been seen, a group which is in opposition to the company and which sets low work standards for its members may be able to enforce these standards only because group membership is so important to the individuals involved. From a managerial viewpoint, it is important to foster not only cohesion, but also as much trust and security in the company as possible. To some extent, again, this may be beyond immediate supervisory control. It may be an organizational matter, of the kind to be discussed in the next chapter. But a manager can do certain things to minimize opposition to the company just because he represents it to his subordinates. Anything which will convince them that promises will be kept and that they can expect fair treatment, as well as assistance when they need it, will contribute to the goal. In this regard actions always speak louder than words. As noted in Chapter 4, if a feeling of trust can also be combined with some feeling of participation in the decision-making process, standards may well rise in the group and the effectiveness of certain individuals increase (72, 90).

When a man is failing because of his reaction to ostracism or is vulnerable because of general isolation, the ideal solution is to help him become integrated into his groups at work. Yet the manager cannot force the group to accept the man, and too obvious attempts to foster acceptance will almost invariably result in rebuffs. Groups reserve unto themselves the right to make membership decisions, and the members usually resent efforts to force this process. The most that may be possible is to place the man in close proximity with some member who is esteemed by the others and then to hope for the best. Team assignments where the two are forced to work together can be particularly helpful. If the esteemed man should come to like the other, this may pave the way for group acceptance. Such procedures are particularly effective in speeding up the process of integrating new employees.

Yet there is little point in being overly optimistic about the practical value of using work-organizing and guiding prerogatives as a means of fostering acceptance by a cohesive group. More often than not, these attempts fail. When this happens, and when the man is clearly ineffective as a result of his rejection, the only answer is to transfer him to a job in a group where there is a greater likelihood of his being received with approval. The crucial point is to determine exactly what it is about him that has caused his rejection. Then if it is possible, a group must be found in which his job skills are applicable and which is unlikely to ostracize him. This may be as simple as taking a recent *émigré* from a rural area out of a group made up entirely of city gang members and putting him with several other "country boys." But it may also be as difficult as finding a place in upper management for a potentially outstanding man who, for example, has an unhappy facility for making a play for his co-workers' wives, and who then becomes upset when he is rejected by the husbands. Perhaps a group of confirmed bachelors can be located; perhaps not.

Transfer is also the ideal solution for most cases where the employee cannot adapt to rotating job assignments, and likewise for cases where the man's ineffectiveness is caused by his rejecting the group rather than vice versa. In the latter instance a strong motive is almost invariably operating in conjunction with the group factor, and the man experiences his mere presence in his current social context as a frustration of that motive. Since changing the motivational hierarchy is very difficult under such circumstances, it is more appropriate to provide the type of associations he desires, if at all possible. Similarly, the man who has been unable to achieve emotionally close relationships because of rotating job assignments should be placed in a stable group. This should be easy if he has been performing different jobs in different groups, since he already has multiple skills to choose from. The fact that he has not used any of these to advantage in the past matters little; if the performance analysis is correct, the provision of a group to belong to should raise him to an effective performance level.

Where the group is contributing to ineffectiveness through what has been termed misplaced loyalty, the essential managerial requirement is, of course, to break through the protective screen and learn what is going on. This can only be accomplished if the gap between leader and subordinates is not excessive. The manager who spends most of his time in his office and rarely talks with his men will have difficulty learning about problems in the group which others wish to keep from him. On the other hand, the superior who is most likely to break through the screen is also most likely to be caught in the cohesive web. He may well be the type of person who finds it difficult to assume a managerial role and who is most frequently seen working alongside his men. If so, his knowledge will not result in action.

Some managers have worked out what amounts to a tacit agreement regarding the exchange of information. Certain individuals in any group always like to be "in the know," to serve as key links in the grapevine. They will often provide information about other workers in exchange for preferred access to data which comes down from higher levels. Since certain information always reaches the manager first, he can use this partial control over the communication processes to find out other things he needs to know to perform his job effectively. In view of the crucial importance of unearthing ineffective performance and its possible causes, such procedures would seem to be entirely appropriate. If one alcoholic can be identified and helped or one severe neurotic induced to enter treatment, then the use of such an informal communication source is justified. Unfortunately, however, a manager will have to exhibit considerable skill if he is to continue to obtain information of this kind over an extended period of time. The group may well resent this type of intrusion.

As previously indicated, crisis and separation reactions of the kind discussed in Chapter 6 may occur in response to group rather than family instigation. The source matters little insofar as corrective action is concerned; the appropriate procedures are the same. The death of a person performing the same kind of work may introduce certain unique factors, however. In such cases the feeling that "it might have been me" can precipitate a rapid breakdown which need not follow the pattern described for grief reactions. In order to minimize such effects, it is particularly important for the manager to refrain from saying anything that might suggest the work was responsible. All too frequently someone ventures the opinion that "anyone in that kind of work is bound to end up with a heart attack eventually," and a man in a parallel job is overcome with panic. Usually the anxiety in such instances is so intense that the man can be induced to seek professional help.

When a man's failure is directly attributable to inconsiderate treatment by his superior or to an abdication of managerial responsibilities, the ideal solution is a change in the manager's behavior. Such a manager must come to recognize what he is doing and gain sufficient understanding of his own feelings and motives to permit change. The same prescription holds if a manager is using inappropriate standards and criteria. He must develop a capacity to discriminate between personal feelings toward a subordinate and opinions regarding his work effectiveness. This requires considerable self-understanding and the ability to act on the basis of such insight.

In essence, what is required is that the manager bring about a shift in his own hierarchy of motives and the dominance relationships involved. As has been noted, it is very difficult to induce such changes in a subordinate. It is no easier when the manager himself is the object. Very few people can accomplish this sort of thing on their own. Almost invariably outside assistance is required if more than superficial changes are to occur. There is no question that a number of sessions with a qualified clinical psychologist or psychiatrist can contribute much to self-understanding and ultimately to managerial effectiveness. Although it is by no means common for managers to seek this kind of assistance, many mental health workers in training do undertake psychotherapy as part of their professional preparation. From this experience it would appear that initially well-adjusted people can improve their effectiveness rather markedly in a relatively short period of time.

In industry it is more common to resort to some type of management development program to achieve similar results. Sensitivity training or T-group training is basically aimed at providing the manager with an increased ability to see himself as others see him (140). It is hoped that through this means he will gain greater self-understanding and the capacity to adapt his actions to situational demands in a flexible manner. Although the effectiveness of this kind of program in bringing about motivational change has not yet been clearly demonstrated, other management development efforts have been shown to possess such capabilities. Studies indicate that training can contribute to increased consideration in dealing with subordinates (120, 123) and to greater acceptance of the managerial role (79, 132, 133). Whether such changes, once established, will be stabilized appears to depend on factors extrinsic to the training per se. Ideally, all levels of management should participate in the development program and have an equal opportunity for change. If this is not done, the effects of training may be counteracted.

The alternative to changing the behavior of the manager himself is, of course, to change the specific individual to whom the subordinate reports. This may be done by replacing the man in charge or by transferring the subordinate so that he receives a different kind of supervision in another group. There is no question that certain individuals possess characteristic emotional reactions and motives which make it inevitable that they will fail under certain kinds of managers. Where these managers are equally lacking in flexibility, the only solution is a change in supervision. If many employees are involved, it may be best that the manager be replaced. If there are only a few, their transfer into groups where more suitable supervision is available may be sufficient to correct the situation.

8

THE COMPANY

Having discussed the various small groups, including families and associations at work, which may influence performance, we now turn to the next larger social unit. Many decisions reached at the organizational level take on, as they filter down to their final points of application, increasing significance for specific individuals. Decisions of this kind are constantly being made at the higher managerial levels of every firm and in most cases are rendered with no direct personal knowledge of the individuals involved.

Many of these higher-level decisions culminate in policies which may be established with regard to a great many aspects of company operations—sales, purchasing, production, finance, personnel, etc. (149, 155). For our purposes those in the personnel area are the most relevant, since they are particularly likely to have an impact on individual performance. Such policies deal with promotion, wage and salary administration, employee benefits, leaves for military service and illness, retirements, labor relations, and many other matters. They are formulated to apply to all the employees of the company or, on occasion, to specific groups, and they indicate what actions should be taken when certain conditions arise. They tend, therefore, to limit the discretion of individual managers and to serve as commands which are invoked when appropriate circumstances arise. Policies are, of course, also made at lower levels to guide the behavior of subordinates, but these are best treated as aspects of the leadership process. This chapter will be concerned only with the effects of organizational policy.

The results of these semipermanent guiding decisions at high levels are generally evaluated in terms of the overall impact on company objectives. It is also possible to raise questions regarding the effects on specific employees: A policy which is generally beneficial can still have negative consequences for a given individual. A policy of promotion from within can prove very successful and yet contribute to failure when a man who is the only possible candidate inside the organization is advanced in grade and becomes ineffective as a result. It is the nature of such directives that they apply to large groups of people and that their success must be evaluated in terms of the balance of results. Only when the negative consequences, such as performance failures, become too widespread or when more effective policies are available but not instituted, can these formulations be said to be poor.

This chapter will deal with these unintended consequences of policy formulation and also with cases where individual decisions at the organizational level are instrumental in failure. The latter are characteristically made either by the officers of the company or by the specific men to whom such powers have been delegated. They deal with matters not covered by policy which arise in the normal course of events and which require action at a level above that of the immediate superior. As with policies, these organizational decisions may have either positive or negative consequences for performance. They may also, over time, accumulate to form what amounts to policy by precedent. It is in these cases, where a series of individual decisions have coalesced into organizational policy without consideration of broader consequences, that ineffective performance is most likely to result.

As the discussion proceeds, the primary emphasis will be on the negative consequences of organizational action. This does not necessarily imply that the policy under consideration is poor or that the specific organizational decision should not have been made. There are many more things to consider in evaluating such actions than the performance failure of a single individual. Our concern with the causes of ineffectiveness may lead to an impression of repeated criticism, but this is not intended. Without question most top-management decisions in most companies have a generally positive effect on performance and on the attainment of company objectives. If this were not the case, the number of unsuccessful companies would be much greater than it is. In addition, it is a rare company indeed which produces all the strategic factors which will be noted. Some generally occur in one type of firm, some in another. The points to be made represent a distillation derived from a great many sources.

The extent to which the individual manager can do anything to remove the causes of ineffective performance of the type discussed in this chapter varies considerably. If employed in a position where he can make policy or have a direct influence on its formulation, a manager may well initiate corrective action himself. Managers at lower levels, however, are relatively powerless when organizational factors are strategic. The most they can do is to bring the negative effects of a policy or higher-level decision to the attention of their superiors. This may or may not result in a change, depending on many factors. Nevertheless, it is important from the point of view of organizational objectives that such feedback occurs

Those at higher levels must obtain information regarding the impact of their policies in order to evaluate them. Only if managers who are in a position to observe these effects do in fact send their impressions back up the line, can appropriate reformulations be made. However, in many companies feedback is not provided, usually because it is considered "suicidal" to criticize the actions of those responsible for one's future career.

Since the individual manager's role where organizational factors are present is in most cases advisory at best, it is appropriate to ask why managers at lower levels need bother to identify such factors at all when making a performance analysis. The answer is in part that they must do so to provide feedback. Without detailed knowledge of the consequences of higher-level actions, it would indeed be foolish for a man to comment on them to his superiors. Secondly, knowing that the causes of a subordinate's failure are of an organizational nature and beyond the manager's control can make the managerial job considerably easier. Once this fact has been clearly established, his energies can be devoted to problems more amenable to solution. As most managers are well aware, there are some things which cannot be changed. The following discussion of the various company policies and high-level decisions which may assume a strategic role will, then, give only limited attention to corrective action. No separate section will be devoted to such matters. Implications for policy change and decision making at higher levels in the company will be noted when they are appropriate, but with full realization that such changes may not be available or desirable as immediate solutions to problems of ineffectiveness.

Insufficient Organizational Action

Ineffective performance may occur because the company does not take the action necessary to eliminate the causes of failure. This may be a matter of deliberate choice. Decisions which preclude establishing the conditions necessary for effective performance may have been reached after extensive study. As an example, let us take various company decisions with regard to investment in training. Most firms make it a practice to hire people for a great many jobs who are already fully educated or trained. They establish policies which preclude investing in certain types of development activities and accordingly do not provide internal facilities for this purpose. Nor do they make outside resources available at company expense. As a result a man may be permitted to fail due to insufficient or inadequate training without any corrective action being taken.

Except under special circumstances, firms do not characteristically invest in stenographic and typing training for secretarial and clerical personnel. Should a girl fail as a result of inadequate preparation in these areas, rectifying the situation is assumed to be entirely up to her. Similarly, illiterates are rarely taught to read and write even though such knowledge is essential to almost all industrial employment. In foreign countries where illiteracy rates are high, however, education may be provided because of either legal requirements or the necessity of obtaining qualified manpower. Yet even in such situations many instances of failures attributable to investment decisions can be cited.

Advanced training in job-related technical specialities is sometimes provided at company expense, but this is not universally true. Many companies will pay for courses taken in local universities, although the payments may be predicated on the attainment of certain grades. But many others will not. They will permit a man to fail because he lacks the technical knowledge required rather than supply it at company expense.

Similar investment decisions are often made regarding the treatment of physical and emotional disorders. Some firms will provide treatment in company-operated dispensaries or even hospitals. Others contribute extensively to union medical facilities or to comprehensive insurance plans. Still others operate on the assumption that treatment can be, or should be, left to the individual. As a result no specific action involving company expenditures is prescribed when a man fails due to inadequate treatment of an illness. The individual who does not seek help or who turns to quacks is left to his own devices.

In these and other instances that might be cited, the man is permitted to fail without direct action being taken that would involve a cost to the company. This, of course, does not necessarily preclude the use of transfer and improved placement to overcome the deficiency. Even transfer, however, may be carried out without sufficient investment in personnel procedures to provide any assurance of success in the new position. Some companies maintain only skeletal personnel departments and take the risk that employees may not be appropriately assigned. Thus a policy decision regarding investment in personnel placement procedures has been reached which makes a number of failures inevitable. Organizational-action failures of this kind will be taken up in greater detail shortly.

In reaching such policy decisions most companies take a variety of factors into account (152). A primary consideration, of course, is cost. Some investments are too expensive even to think about, or they involve an initial outlay so large that there is felt to be little chance of its recovery. Extensive training or medical treatment, for instance, may involve a greater expenditure than seems warranted in view of the apparent gains. Also, to the extent that qualified practitioners to carry out the action are in short supply, their services are likely to be very expensive. Thus, availability of physicians, psychologists, educators, and others may be not only a consideration of importance in its own right, but a matter of some financial significance.

The second major factor is time. Will the investment, even if successful in restoring effective performance, achieve it rapidly enough? There may not be sufficient time available to await the results of long training or treatment. For example, an experienced personnel man with a bachelor's degree in psychology might be given responsibility for developing an extensive psychological testing program within the company. Subsequently it may become clear that he lacks the necessary knowledge to do the job effectively. A question would then arise as to whether the company should invest in the required two or three years of graduate study for the man. If it should be evident that the testing program is urgently needed, the investment would presumably not be made. The man would be permitted to fail, at least in the testing position, and a qualified person would be hired from the outside to undertake the work immediately. Considerations of time would preclude investment in corrective action.

Another important factor is the availability of suitable replacements. Are there people in the labor market who can take over the job and perform effectively, if an investment is not made in the incumbent? In the preceding example, for instance, the company would have been forced to provide graduate training for its own man if it had been unable to recruit a qualified psychologist. Similarly, most companies would invest in typing and stenographic training for secretaries if pretrained people were not available in sufficient numbers. During the engineering shortages of the early 1950s a number of companies gave extensive consideration to establishing engineering programs of their own.

Finally, in making such decisions the company must evaluate the probability that investment in corrective action will achieve the desired results. What are the risks involved? The personnel man in the psychological testing job might fail as a graduate student, or he might complete the work successfully. Certainly in the areas of psychological and medical treatment, the outcome is often uncertain. From a managerial viewpoint there is little point in spending large sums of money when there is little chance that the procedure will restore effective performance. The individual himself or society as a whole, having different objectives than a business organization, may, of course, wish to make such investments where a firm would not.

Considerations of cost, time, availability of replacements, and risk may, then, lead to a decision which is strategic for the failure of certain individuals. Certain employees are permitted to fail, somewhat in the manner that machines are allowed to break down under a deferred-maintenance plan. But the lack of organizational action is not always a direct result of a policy decision. In many cases the company omits special services or conditions of employment for reasons having nothing to do with investment considerations. There may be deficiencies and conflicts in personnel policy formulation and planning which necessitate considerable improvisation at lower levels. Such improvisations may, on occasion, be totally inadequate to the task of maintaining effective performance levels.

At other times policies may have been formulated only to fail in implementation. It may happen that a man hired with the understanding that he will require certain actions or conditions to do satisfactory work is later denied them. Across-the-board cuts in the budgets of all departments during times of financial difficulty seem particularly likely to produce such results. The implementation of policy may give way before the practical reality of available financial resources, even though top management never intended that this should be the consequence of the budget cut.

Similarly, an individual may have a physical or emotional condition which necessitates his employment in a certain type of job. A physical handicap, for instance, may be noted at the time of the preemployment physical examination. Yet for a variety of reasons he may not be put in a job he can do and may thus be permitted to fail. Or a company may have an active safety program with specific regulations regarding the use of protective devices. Yet difficulties in the purchasing process may produce a shortage of goggles, with the consequence that at least one employee receives a severe injury and thereby fails in performance. It may also be that the company, although generally interested in reducing accidents, does little by way of either studying jobs for potential hazards or establishing uniform safety rules. As a result the actions taken at lower levels may be diverse and on occasion totally inadequate.

Often companies hire employees who lack job knowledge with the understanding that training will be provided after employment. Many management trainees, including the great majority of liberal arts graduates, initially have no usable job skills. These are to be developed through training programs, job rotation, and the like. Sometimes, however, things do not work out as intended. The man misses instruction because of illness, or he is considered so good that he does not require the usual training, or the program is not set up as planned. Occasionally the need for productive workers becomes so acute that development efforts are curtailed. For whatever reason, the company unintentionally deprives the man of the preparation known to be essential for success in his work.

Personnel Placement

As previously noted, placement decisions may contribute to ineffective performance because the company had adopted a policy of limited investment in this area. In such cases little effort is made to study the various jobs with a view to identifying specific demands, and people are assigned on the basis of minimal information regarding their abilities, emotional patterns, motives, and physical characteristics. Sometimes placements are made largely at random, depending on the immediate availability of people and the existence of openings. Sometimes policies which do not require detailed knowledge of job demands and individual characteristics are invoked; for example, the dictate that everyone must start at the bottom in one of several entry occupations and work up through the department to which he was initially assigned. The failure of organizational action need not stem from a meager investment in the personnel function, however; placement errors occur in all firms, even those with the largest and most competent personnel components. The incidence may be sharply reduced, but the problem cannot be entirely eliminated.

Placement decisions need not, of course, be organizational in nature. They are not always made from a separate staff department which has been delegated authority in this area. Although the closed shop has been outlawed, there are still many situations in which men are assigned to work largely at the discretion of the union. Sometimes the individual manager has complete authority in these matters. It is more usual, however, for applicants to be screened in the personnel office. Then only those considered capable of performing a certain job are forwarded to an individual manager for consideration. In the more typical case, therefore, the control of recruiting and selection processes residing in a personnel or industrial relations group gives that group a major role in the final placement decision. As the tools and procedures required for the study of jobs and individuals become increasingly complex, this role may be expected to expand. The authority of expertise has already tended to make placement primarily a special staff function within many large corporations. In the smaller companies a shift in this direction is increasingly apparent. To the extent that such changes have occurred in a firm, errors in the placement process must be considered strategic factors of a basically organizational nature.

A great many ways in which people may be incorrectly placed have already been discussed. Let us take this opportunity to review them briefly. A man may be assigned at too high a level for his verbal ability, or he may lack the special abilities (numerical, mechanical, etc.)

demanded by his work. There may be intellectual deficiencies of a more specific kind in the area of job knowledge. Emotions such as anxiety, depression, guilt, and anger may be persistently aroused in a certain job and contribute to failure. Symptoms of an emotional nature can be precipitated by the stresses inherent in a position and interfere with performance. Neurotic symptoms are particularly likely to have such detrimental effects when the placement is at a relatively high level. Dominant types of motivation may be continually frustrated in a specific kind of work. Certain jobs do not permit the satisfaction of important positive motives or the avoidance of major sources of distress. Specific occupational interests may be inappropriate to the particular position.

Equally detrimental consequences may derive from errors in fitting physical characteristics to job demands. Various handicaps may interfere with performance. A person with brain damage may be overassigned relative to his intellectual and perceptual capabilities. Physical proportions such as size and weight may be inappropriate to performance requirements. Strength and stamina, motor speed, and coordination, as well as other more specific muscular skills and competencies, may be inadequate. Vision and hearing, including depth perception, color vision, and other factors, may not be sufficient for job demands. Speed of perceptual response may be below what is required.

Placement errors involving the individual's intellectual, emotional, motivational, or physical functioning may also contain certain social or group aspects. Thus, some people fail because they have been assigned to work requiring constant separation from an important family group. Or they fail because their work creates certain family problems which in turn interfere with effectiveness. A wife may be separated from her parents by a foreign assignment. A man may work in close association with a brother and permit his performance to suffer as a result of old rivalries.

Work-group factors may also operate. The group may be devoid of the cohesiveness a specific man needs for effective performance. Or its cohesiveness may be based on characteristics which the man lacks, so that he becomes ostracized. The type of supervision available may be totally inadequate to an individual's needs. He may require kindness and consideration, but work under a manager who is incapable of such behavior. He may have motivational problems which necessitate firm direction and the establishment of high standards, but belong to a group which is in essence leaderless.

As will be seen in the chapters which follow, placement errors may also be associated with societal and situational factors. This discussion, however, will be limited to errors involving the strategic factors which have already been noted. Particularly important are the problems of over- and underplacement. Men may be put in jobs which demand more of them intellectually than they are capable of producing. They may also be assigned "over their heads" in an emotional sense: Symptoms may be precipitated by the specific situational stresses inherent in higher-level positions. (Chapter 11 contains a more extended discussion of this problem.) Many men do not want the responsibility inherent in managerial work (147). They tend to view such employment with an anticipation of anxiety which leads them to avoid job duties. When pushed or pulled into such positions by threats or offers of large incomes, they are very likely to fail. Furthermore, the overplaced individual is likely to create difficulties for those under him. Many problems develop when a man is put in charge of others who are clearly more competent than he.

Underplacement, on the other hand, need not assume an equally important position for ineffective performance. From a study employing the occupational levels described in Chapter 2 and a sample of 745 people typical of the 1953 United States labor force, it appears that at that time 28 percent of those in unskilled jobs had sufficient verbal ability to permit them to handle positions at the top level. Another 36 percent were qualified for skilled work. Among the semiskilled, underplacement was also common: 48 percent had the verbal ability requisite for professional and managerial employment (12). Even though characteristics other than verbal ability might preclude assigning many of these individuals to higher-level work, there is still a tremendous wastage of developed intelligence involved. Yet it is doubtful that the majority of these people are ineffective. Performance failure is not that widespread. Many people do not experience a sense of frustration when employed in jobs which are in a sense beneath them. Their motivation remains entirely satisfactory.

This is not invariably the case however. In one study conducted by the writer in the offices of a single company, performance failures were found to be unusually frequent among very intelligent female employees working in what would be classified as level 2 or skilled positions. This company, like many others, had very few women in managerial and professional jobs. As a result those who had reached the more responsible secretarial positions or something comparable were unlikely to progress further. For many of the most intelligent this situation apparently became intolerable, and either the quality of their work fell off badly or they began to have a negative impact on the work of others because of their constant bickering. Similar effects may occur in other situations. Disciplinary problems can well arise out of underplacement. The early union leaders in the United States, most of whom were of well-above-average intelligence, would undoubtedly have been placed in this category. In short, underplacement can be strategic for performance failure, but unlike overplacement it need not be so. Where it does assume a causal role, promotion, if it is at all feasible, can provide a solution.

Although, as the discussion has indicated, the personnel placement process is most likely to contribute to failure by putting a square peg in a round hole or vice versa, there is an additional way in which it may become strategic. Occasionally, for training purposes or other reasons, men are transferred from one job to another in rapid succession. As a result they are constantly faced with the initial ostracism of a new group and repeatedly required to gain acceptance from new associates. For some individuals this may be so difficult that effective work becomes almost impossible. Thus, although transfer has been recommended as a solution to many instances of ineffectiveness, it should be recognized that excessive transfer is possible. Certainly such shifts should be undertaken with a specific objective in mind and with some reason to believe that this objective will be achieved. The random shuffling of personnel which appears to characterize a few organizations is likely to have negative consequences in the long run.

In spite of the considerations raised in this section, it must be recognized that there are times when a company must assign large groups of employees en masse to a new type of work. On these occasions it is not always possible to take time to work out appropriate placements. Conversion to new equipment may introduce such a necessity. So too may the discontinuance of a product line, coupled with continuing high demand for other products. Or a large order may have to be filled on a rush basis. Under such circumstances an increase in the number of ineffective performers is to be expected, but the risk must be taken in order even to approximate production requirements.

When exigencies of this kind arise, ineffectiveness attributable to resentment can be minimized, although some errors of placement will inevitably remain. In one study conducted at the Harwood Manufacturing Company, various methods of introducing job changes were compared (145). In order to meet competition the procedures for making pajamas had to be revised. Some of the groups were called together and told what changes were necessary as well as what payment procedures would be utilized. This technique produced a permanent drop in the rate of production, a high rate of grievances, and 17 percent turnover within forty days. By way of contrast, other groups were allowed to decide upon their own changed working procedures after being told about the inroads of competition. These experienced only a brief inital drop in output, which was followed by a sizable permanent increase. Grievances and turnover were nonexistent. Although this instance may be extreme, there is no question that providing detailed information and allowing employees as much freedom as possible in adjusting to change can serve to make mass transfers more peaceful and keep ineffectiveness to a minimum. Sudden job changes, which permit the individual no participation in developing the new work procedures, are particularly likely to produce difficulties.

From what has been said, the reader may have gathered that a flexible personnel placement policy which emphasizes individual differences and varying job demands is most likely to minimize ineffective performance. It is the writer's opinion that this is in fact the case. More rigid policies, although they may yield other advantages, seem to produce more than their share of failures. Many such policies derive from an earlier period when manpower was more expendable and firing relatively easy. Thus, starting everyone, irrespective of final destination, at the bottom in a blue-collar job may result in many failures and disrupted careers among men who would otherwise have made good managers. Rotating all line managers through staff assignments or administrative-assistant positions at some time in their careers can have similar effects. So too may the requirement that all men take a turn in traveling jobs or at a foreign installation. In all these cases, although the diversified experience may be broadening for some, it may produce nothing but failure and anxiety for others. Ideally, only those who can benefit from these experiences should be exposed to them. Placing people in positions in which they must ultimately fail is neither broadening to them nor helpful to the company. Even the use of imperfect techniques for making placements, in terms of the fit between individual characterisics and job demands, will produce fewer failures than rigid enforcement of a single rotation policy, which does not take the differences between individuals into account.

Organizational Overpermissiveness

The strategic factors to be covered in this section are in many ways analogous to those noted in the discussion in Chapter 7 of a manager's failure to assume leadership. The company, too, may become so easygoing and permissive, both in its policy formulation and in its high-level decision making, that the effect on employee motivation is detrimental. The number of ways in which company policies may thus fail to reflect organizational performance objectives are, of course, myriad. The following examples should provide a general idea of the processes involved.

One obvious case is in the area of employee discipline. If provision is not made for disciplinary action when gross infraction of company regulations occurs, there is a good chance that at least a few individuals who would not otherwise get into trouble will do so. The deterrent power of negative sanctions, such as suspension without pay, should not be underestimated. Some people are, of course, totally unaffected by them, but others will go to great lengths to avoid behavior which they believe will result in sanctions being invoked. In their case a lack of operational disciplinary machinery can easily be strategic for performance failure. A striking example is the lenient attitude many firms take toward the theft of company property. It is not uncommon for a major felony to result in nothing more than a reprimand or disciplinary suspension. The drastic step of calling in the police is taken relatively infrequently, unless a sizable permanent cash loss is involved. Yet it is clear that anything short of such action tends to encourage some people in activities of this kind. Losses caused by employee pilfering of materials and equipment are a major cost in many American business enterprises, and although there are numerous factors which have contributed to this, it seems probable that organizational overpermissiveness is largely responsible.

Another problem, which is more likely to affect the quality and quantity of work produced, results from certain training and recruiting policies. It is not uncommon to lure young college graduates by offering extensive training programs. These vary in length, but tend to become longer and longer as companies bid against each other for the people they want. Often the training is described in terms which suggest that the young man will be given a year or two of vacation rather than an intensive educational experience. The result is that those graduates with the least anticipation of pleasure in work are attracted. In a number of cases, the training turns out to be just as undemanding as was originally implied, and the deficiencies in work motivation which existed at hiring are thereby perpetuated. Once a permanent placement is made, failure occurs because the young man has developed a belief that job-integrated work effort is totally unnecessary. Of course, not all initial training is employed as a recruiting inducement, nor does such a procedure necessarily result in minimal work motivation. But unfortunately, the implication that work-related effort is not a requisite for success in the company is carried by a number of programs of this kind.

Grievance procedures can produce similar motivational problems among union-represented employees. In some companies it is not unusual for those who make decisions at steps below the arbitration level to fail to support their first line supervisors. Since the people in the higher echelons are physically far removed from the actual scene of the difficulty, they are not likely to feel personally involved, and it is often tempting to portray the company as an understanding organization which is willing to forgive and forget. The unintended consequence is that supervisors do not discipline subordinates because they fear that the result will be a grievance which is eventually settled against them. An atmosphere of excessive permissiveness permeates the company, and many supervisors feel encouraged to neglect important aspects of the managerial role. At this point the effects of poor leadership noted in Chapter 7 begin to appear. Naturally, some reversals at higher levels are inevitable. Only when the frequency becomes so high that supervisors develop grave doubts regarding their ability to gain support from the company, and union leaders come to expect inevitable success if grievances are carried beyond the initial steps, is there likely to be a detrimental effect on performance.

Excessively liberal sick-leave policies tend to influence employee motivation in a different manner. If there is any implication that the leave time is an employee right comparable to a vacation, sizable increases in absenteeism may result. Although policies vary widely in different parts of the country and in different industries, there are a number of firms which pay full salary over considerable periods without checking to see whether the claims of illness are valid. In some companies the right to such payments starts with the date of employment, and no waiting period for individual illnesses exists. Such procedures can convey the impression that absenteeism is condoned by the company. Some employees will use up allotted sick leaves as soon as possible year after year and then take additional time off for real illnesses. The result can be that a man is not present on the job enough to be considered effective.

A final example of organizational overpermissiveness takes us back to the matter of personnel placement. On occasion a company will adopt policies which make transfers extremely easy to accomplish. As a result, managers are encouraged to shift problem employees to other groups as soon as performance difficulties become apparent rather than carry out a performance analysis and apply appropriate solutions. A man who is failing may go from one group to another in rapid succession, in the process losing any chance of being restored to an effective level. Certainly a placement policy which makes transfer extremely difficult can have detrimental effects, since appropriate solutions will be blocked. But a too easy approach is equally likely to contribute to ineffectiveness. Those in charge of the various work groups are encouraged to shirk managerial responsibilities, and there is an excessive amount of personnel shifting which has no relationship to performance improvement.

The Span of Control

Much has been written in the literature dealing with business organization regarding the span of control. Generally the emphasis has been on the ideal span: the size of the group which can be effectively supervised by a single manager. Our concern, although similar, has a somewhat different orientation. If a company is organized so that managers are responsible for large groups of subordinates, the sheer numbers involved may preclude adequate performance analysis and the application of appropriate solutions. It is impossible to deal with individuals and their problems in the manner proposed in this book if the manager has so many people reporting to him that he is overwhelmed with work. Thus the mere size of the group can become a strategic factor in a case of failure. In a smaller unit the ineffective man could have been given the attention required to attain an acceptable performance level.

In situations of this type the difficulty superficially appears to derive from ineffective supervision. The manager, in failing to deal with motivational or other problems in his subordinate, gives the impression that he has abdicated his role. He may even believe this himself. But on closer observation it becomes evident that it would be physically impossible for any manager to handle problems of performance failure with such extensive demands on his time. Thus the problem emerges as one of company policy—of decisions regarding staffing and the organization of work—rather than of leadership within the group.

The question remains: What size group should a manager have, if this type of strategic influence is to be eliminated? There has been some agreement (149) that the ideal number is in the range of 4 to 8 at the upper levels of the organization and between 8 and 15, or perhaps somewhat more, at the lowest level. When these figures are set against those found in actual practice, marked disparities emerge. Studies in British industry indicate that production groups may vary from 5 or less to 150, the average being about 24. In the United States similar groups seem to run somewhat larger, the average number in one survey being 29 (115).

The evidence on the relationship between group size and productivity permits more definite conclusions. There seems little question that smaller groups are generally more effective (89, 115). The data available indicate that groups of 10 or less are likely to produce at a rate 6 to 8 percent above that found in groups of 40 or 50. Presumably the opportunity which the smaller units provide for adequate handling of performance failure is a major factor in this result. The increased cohesiveness which is likely to develop may also contribute.

It would seem, then, that groups should be made as small as possible within the limits set by the inherent organization of work and the availability of competent supervision. If effective managers cannot be obtained, of course, group size will have to be increased. It has been suggested that the degree of this increase must be based, at least in part, on the trained competence of the workers. "Green" employees will require more attention than experienced ones, and thus the number a manager can handle effectively is considerably less (157). This may be considered a special case of the more general proposition that the span of control should be established with reference to the probable incidence of ineffectiveness. The importance of keeping a group small increases when the men are inexperienced, turnover is high, and conditions which predispose toward a high incidence of performance failure are present.

When the span-of-control problem is placed in its organizational context, the question of the desirable number of managerial levels frequently emerges as a corollary. From the viewpoint of performance effectiveness, a minimum number of steps in the hierarchy seems desirable. Communication and implementation of policy are facilitated in the "flat" organization, and feedback from lower levels is more likely to occur. This conclusion need not conflict with that regarding group size. The higher the level of a position, the greater the effort that most organizations devote to screening and selection, and the more experienced and intelligent the incumbents. As a result the probability of performance failure tends to be considerably reduced above the first level of supervision. Such conditions would seem to indicate that the span of control at the top might well equal the largest span employed at the lowest level and could even exceed it without becoming strategic for performance failure. If groups within the company were established on this basis, there should be little difficulty in maintaining a relatively flat organization. It is the telescoping of group size as the hierarchy is ascended that contributes most to the proliferation of levels.

These conclusions must be qualified in terms of one factor: the extent of managerial activity required in addition to that of a basically supervisory nature. Many company presidents, for instance, must devote a considerable proportion of their time to representing the company personally with outside organizations and groups. This public relations function may preclude giving much attention to the performance of subordinates. Similarly, an industrial relations manager may have to spend many hours in negotiations with union representatives and in efforts to settle disputes or to ward off organizing attempts. For him an unusually small span of control may still be too large and may contribute to the failure of an individual in his group. Probably the best solution in such cases is to employ a direct line assistant to handle more strictly supervisory matters. Often an executive vice-president performs in this role for the company president. Certainly the extent to which a manager must carry out specialized work functions, in addition to directing the performance of others, must be taken into account in deciding whether a performance failure is attributable to an excessive span of control.

Inappropriate Organizational Standards and Criteria

Just as a manager may establish procedures for evaluation which make a man ineffective by definition only, so too may the organization as a whole introduce standards and criteria which are inappropriate. In general, inappropriate factors are somewhat less likely to be strategic at the organizational level than at the level of immediate supervision. Men in policy-making positions are usually so intimately and personally concerned with the attainment of company goals that they are unlikely to let irrelevant factors intrude. Yet such things do occur. An employee is defined as ineffective and relieved of his job because a relative of a high-ranking company official desires the position. Prevailing prejudices become institutionalized as part of the company's selection and promotion policies. It is possible for any of the inappropriate factors noted in Chapter 7 to become strategic at the organizational level.

One of the primary ways in which the company may create performance failure by definition is in connection with the control process. Control requires that performance standards be established, usually but not necessarily in budgetary terms, and actual performance compared with the ideal (148). Generally it is assumed that remedial action will be taken if the two consistently deviate. These standards set at the organizational level can be inappropriately high, as when an inadequate budget is allocated to an unpopular manager to ensure his failure. A company may also introduce criteria having no direct association with performance. A manager may, for instance, be expected to achieve election to a certain club before being considered effective in a job at his level. Such uses of inappropriate factors in carrying out evaluations for control or other purposes are presumably rare, but the possibility that they may exist cannot be arbitrarily ruled out in conducting any performance analysis.

There is one area in which it appears that inappropriate criteria are being extensively applied at the organizational level, although it has not been common practice to consider the matter from this viewpoint. Many companies designate a fixed compulsory retirement age, often sixty-five, without reference to the performance level of the individual. The use of age in this manner would seem to fit the conception of an inappropriate criterion, since men are thereby defined as ineffective on a basis having no necessary relation to organizational goals. Of course, if it develops that a man actually wishes to stop work, this interpretation is incorrect. It is important, therefore, to look at the evidence regarding the attitudes of people approaching retirement.

In one study of the employees of a manufacturing firm located in Liverpool, England (156), questions indicated that approximately 68 percent did not wish to retire at the compulsory age of sixty-five. Among those who did, the great majority considered themselves physically incapable of continuing beyond the established date. The primary reason given for wanting to remain on the job was financial. Most of the men were in blue-collar positions and all were over forty-five. A study conducted among members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union in New York City yielded a similar conclusion (158). At least 50 percent of those over fifty-five did not plan to retire at the earliest possible age. The union agreement provided that retirement with pension could occur at sixty-five or any time thereafter that the employee desired. The actual average age of retirement was 68.5. It is interesting to note that the wish to stop work became less frequent in successively older groups. As the prospect became increasingly real, there was apparently a tendency to look on it with less favor. These findings are supported by other research (151). Probably the wish to continue work is even more prevalent in management groups. Clearly, there are many people who do not wish to retire and who are being forced out by compulsory provisions. The great majority have at least ten more years to live and are capable of an extended period of effective performance.

Chapters 2 and 5 have reviewed the evidence regarding changes in skills and abilities throughout life. There is no reason to believe that job-related intellectual abilities will decline in the sixties and early seventies unless a brain disorder develops, and this happens in only a small percentage of cases. Physical illnesses generally are more frequent in older employees and may result in extensive absence from work, although again, these occur on a selective basis and are not concentrated in any specific age range. Muscular and sensory skills and speed are likely to decline. Clerical, sales, and managerial tasks do not seem to be affected by these physical changes, but performance in certain kinds of heavy work is disturbed. However, in many cases this can be compensated for by job changes. In the Liverpool factory study previously noted, 55 percent of the men in production departments between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five transferred to positions involving lighter work. Only 7 percent shifted to more physically demanding jobs.

In view of these data regarding the attitudes and performance of older workers, there does seem to be some justification for concluding that a fixed retirement age really is inappropriate in many cases. At least, a great many people who are performing effectively by other standards and who wish to continue are forced out of their jobs as a result. A retirement policy more closely tied to actual performance would be more consistent with the objectives of business enterprise. Actually, such policies are in effect in many firms. The interested reader should consult the book *Flexible Retirement* (151) for examples and further information.

In view of the cost involved in retiring employees on pension several years before this becomes necessary, and considering the loss of significant skills and knowledge, especially at the managerial level, it is important to ask why so many companies do have a mandatory retirement system. The major arguments appear to be that the procedure is simple, orderly, and impartial. Furthermore, promotional opportunities for younger men become available more frequently and on a predictable basis.

Behind this position seems to lie a marked concern with reducing jealousy and conflict. If everyone is separated at the same age, the system is inherently fair, and no one is likely to become angry because he is being retired while another man is not (or vice versa). It obviates the necessity for telling an individual directly that he is too old to continue work and thus eliminates the resentment that might well be aroused. Also, it serves as a partial control over the ambitions of people in lower-level positions, since they know the specific date when an opening will occur. If this time is not too far distant, any desire to assume the position of an elderly superior is likely to be held in check. If the date were unknown, the probability of overt conflict between an elderly superior and ambitious subordinates would be much greater. In short, a more flexible retirement procedure *can* become a source of trouble which, as will be seen in the next section, some companies cannot afford.

Intracompany Conflict and Organizational Failure

The matter of intracompany conflict is only tangentially related to ineffective performance, but it is so important that the discussion would be incomplete without some reference to it. In all organizations a certain amount of dissension exists. In business concerns it frequently polarizes along group, division, or departmental lines, so that sizable units within a company are consistently in opposition.

Conflict of this kind is most likely to occur under certain conditions (150). For one thing, there must be some feeling that joint decision making is necessary. If two units can operate entirely independently, without the necessity of working out agreements or coordinating their activities, then there is little possibility of trouble. But since nearly all business firms are organized in a complex system of interdependencies involving line and staff, production and marketing, and many other relationships, it is a rare unit indeed which is able to attain freedom from all other groups. Secondly, conflict derives from either differences in goals or differences in the way existing conditions are viewed. If two groups wanted exactly the same things and had identical information available, joint decision making might be expected to present few difficulties. However, where managers' personal ambitions, professional loyalties, varied sources of data, etc. are involved, as they usually are, dissension is very likely to arise.

Many procedures have been devised to minimize this inherent potential for conflict. Organization charts and function lists represent attempts to allocate power and authority in a manner that everyone can agree upon. If it is generally accepted that a given group or manager has jurisdiction in certain areas, then joint decision making is no problem. Disagreements are resolved in favor of the group which is assumed to have authority. Thus, if the manufacturing department wants a special kind of equipment, it usually has no trouble getting it, within limits established by budgetary considerations. The purchasing, industrial relations, and research departments do not possess an equal say-so, even though all may have their own viewpoints and might well wish to be in a position to influence the final decision.

The control process can serve the same purpose. It has as one of its functions the establishment of limits on the size and power of various departments and divisions, through the maintenance of a relatively close relationship between plans and reality. Budgets tend to restrict the process of empire building and introduce some degree of balance in the expenditures and staffing of the various groups. They represent an attempt to reach an agreement on the allocation of available funds and resources. Without this agreement, conflict can easily break out over each expenditure, and one function may assume such a dominant position as to endanger the organization. Marketing might, for instance, gain a preferred status and develop a sales force so large and effective that all the orders cannot possibly be filled, because the funds that might have been used for plant, equipment, and the wages of production workers have already been allocated to marketing.

In essence, then, organization charts, job descriptions, and control procedures have as one of their functions the reduction of conflict and the maintenance of overall organizational goals. Where these procedures are successful, individual and group objectives can be retained in a subordinate position and energies can be devoted primarily to performance and profit maximization. When these formal approaches break down and there is no agreement on power allocation and areas of jurisdiction, conflict is likely to become rampant. Efforts may be increasingly directed against enemies within rather than without the company. Finally organizational goals may be almost forgotten and performance may assume a relatively insignificant position. Conflict, in one way or another, diverts the energies of individuals from their normal work duties (138).

For some people the matter of planning strategies and carrying out sorties against internal adversaries becomes so time-consuming that activities related to the company as a whole are displaced. Other individuals become immersed in trying to circumscribe and control the conflict, to reestablish formal procedures and organization in the company. Although this peacemaker role appears more laudable from the viewpoint of the firm as a whole, it still usually leaves no more time for other aspects of job performance. Many a company president has become so bogged down trying to reconcile differences between his vice-presidents that he has been unable to deal effectively with other company problems. Where the conflict spreads so that a large percentage of the employees are engaged, either as contestants or referees, the probability of organizational disintegration is very high. The company may be forced into a merger or bankruptcy, or it may continue with the help of external support. But it is unlikely to become a profitable enterprise as long as internal conflict remains rampant. The various concerns which have gone out of business as a result of labor-management strife provide a conspicuous example.

Much has been written recently regarding the "organization man," some of it quite derogatory. Yet people who are motivated to conform to the policies and procedures of the firm do provide a bulwark against the ravages of internal conflict. Studies indicate that when a man anticipates pleasure in achieving success, in receiving help and instruction, or in gaining some other goal, and believes he can attain this emotional state through conforming behavior, he is likely to resort consistently to conformity as a means of satisfying his motive (159). If this motive is a dominant one, then deviance will rarely emerge in his behavior. Thus, the truly ambitious man may become a conformist on the job because he expects it to pay off. This means that many people, especially those with strong motives that can be satisfied at work, are easily influenced to become "organization men." Because of the very obvious benefits in terms of reduced potential for internal conflict, it is not surprising that business firms, like nearly all large organizations in our society, have tended to foster conformity in their managements. It is, of course, possible that by making such a strong commitment to conflict minimization, they have suffered a considerable loss in other aspects of performance effectiveness.

The relationship between the extent of conformity and the level of performance is only beginning to receive scientific attention. No one really knows under what conditions and in what jobs conformists are most likely to prove successful, and conversely under what conditions deviance is desirable from a company viewpoint. Initial results of research at the middle management level appear to be conflicting (146, 154), but this may be because differing conceptions of the nature of conformity have been employed by the researchers or because different types of organizations were studied. At the top management level it has been widely contended that nonconformity is characteristic and, in fact, necessary to successful performance (143). However, such evidence as is available does not provide unqualified support for this position (153). Company officers do appear to be less conforming on the average than their subordinates in the management ranks, but there are many who must be considered marked conformists by any definition. When these top management people are compared with others of the same age, even this general tendency disappears. As a group they are no less conforming than men in other occupations who have lived as long and who have attained a similar educational and intellectual level. It appears that their age rather than their specific type of employment is the crucial determinant. Older people generally are relatively noncomforming. Apparently also, deviance increases with advancing age (154). The company officers in their fifties and sixties who appear to be anything but "organization men" may have presented a different picture during their younger days.

These studies have been extended to include an analysis of the relationship between measures of conformity and success at this very highest level. Of the men tested, approximately half were listed in *Who's Who in America.* Those who had achieved a listing and those who had not achieved one were compared in terms of conformity scores. The analysis revealed no real differences between the groups. There was no evidence that nonconformity is particularly likely to be found in association with success in top management. The outstanding managers were in some cases clearly "organization men." Perhaps they worked for companies with a high conflict potential and a need for the stability that conformity at high levels might provide. Others with *Who's Who* listings gave evidence of considerable deviance.

It appears, then, that conformity, like the more formal processes of control, is important in contributing to the survival of a company. Without some conflict-reducing procedures, no firm could exist as a profit-making organization for very long. On the other hand, excessive control and too much pressure to conformity can clearly have stultifying effects (144) and reduce innovation to a bare minimum. A balance is often difficult to achieve, even though it is essential to the maximization of effectiveness within a company.

9

SOCIETY AND ITS VALUES

In the case of the largest social unit which may affect performance, the society of which the man is a member, various cultural influences serve as the actual strategic factors in failure. By a culture is meant the total way of life of a people, the modes of behavior and thought which become cumulative and are transmitted from generation to generation (167). For purposes of performance analysis the crucial determinants are the cultural values—the concepts of right and wrong, good and bad, which constitute the ethical systems and moral precepts as well as the aspirations and ideals of society.

More specifically, cultural values are the widely accepted directives which establish modes of social relations, achievement or performance patterns, goals, approved types of gratification, and social ideals for a society (168). Examples are human dignity, patriotism, sexual morality, private property, religious beliefs, honesty, heroism, democracy, respectability, fair play, cleanliness, equal opportunity, success, and individual freedom. There are many more, but these should be sufficient for illustration.

Such generally accepted concepts of right and wrong serve to direct the behavior of society's members. They are thus instrumental to much of human motivation. They establish anticipated sources of pleasure and distress, indicating acceptable means of achieving positive emotional experiences and of avoiding negative ones. Thus, this chapter will deal with strategic factors very similar to those discussed in Chapter 4. But here the emphasis is on cultural rather than individual motivation—on the things which, as members of our particular society, we have learned to believe *should* be done. Although these motives exist in specific individuals, they derive from society as a whole. The distinction between individual and cultural motivation may seem unimportant at this point; after all, motives are motives. As will be seen, however, whether a motive is relatively unique to the person or is a derivative of his culture can have considerable significance for performance analysis and for the reduction of ineffectiveness.

Since cultural values serve to define the material in this chapter, an initial section will be devoted to a general discussion of these societal imperatives, including matters of variation and change, transmission, conflict, and specific influence. Research dealing with the values characterizing a number of culture groups is cited. Then the various ways in which cultural factors may become strategic will be taken up, with special attention to certain values which occupy positions of importance in American culture and in the business world—equity, individual freedom, proscriptions against the taking of human life, sexual morality, honesty, and the liberal ideology. A final section will discuss the types of action which may be taken when societal factors have been established as strategic.

The Nature of Cultural Values

It is the essence of cultural values that they provide the individual members of a society with explicit guidelines for their behavior. There is no need to think about alternatives; as long as one's actions are in accord with these directives, the possibility of being judged wrong by the majority does not exist. Thus society makes available to its members an automatic mechanism which can serve as a silent agent for the selection and channeling of behavior. Experiments indicate that we become particularly sensitive to positively valued objects, while our perception of that which is negatively valued is often delayed. Similarly, young children have been found to exaggerate the perceived size of cultural symbols in accordance with the value placed on them (163, 164).

The methods employed to perpetuate a culture are complex, and an extended discussion is certainly beyond the scope of this volume. Basically, the cultural heritage is transmitted from one generation to another through the actions and words of parents and associates. The same things are said and taught over and over again in homes and schools throughout the country, and thus a uniformity of behavior and thought is created. If a child acts in a manner which is inconsistent with accepted values (perhaps he is dishonest or impolite) the parents can be expected to feel acutely uncomfortable and to seek a reduction in their distress by forcing the child to do what is culturally defined as right. Punishments may well be invoked. Eventually the child comes to accept the values as guides to his own behavior, because he has learned that only in this way can he escape the unpleasant emotions that so often accompany deviance. The values become part of individual motivational hierarchies, and actions, or even thoughts, which are at variance with them take on the capacity to elicit intense feelings of guilt and shame. Thus the culture imposes its control over individual motives which might be detrimental to it (166).

It is, then, in the nature of values that they are closely allied to the emotions. Actions or impulses which deviate may well provoke extreme and intense feelings. A man may experience considerable guilt if he himself deviates. Or, if others in their treatment of him do not follow the patterns he considers right, he may react with rage and resentment. Parents pass on the values of their culture because they feel they must. Should they fail to participate in this perpetuation process, they can expect to have strong feelings of guilt and shame.

This kind of negative motivation often operates even when the parents themselves do not follow the cultural dictates they teach. Children are sent to Sunday school by adults who do not go to church. Chastity and morality are taught by some of the most sexually promiscuous parents. Because of these emotional concomitants, cultural values often take on a compulsive, demanding quality, which makes them very resistant to change. They may thus assume a position of considerable dominance in an individual's motivational hierarchy.

As has already been implied, values are neither universal nor universally acted upon within a society. They are by definition widely accepted, and behavior generally tends to be in accord with them, but there are numerous exceptions. Other motives may hold a more dominant position and therefore determine behavior when a conflict arises. The individual may experience guilt, yet still find his value overruled. On occasion, people hold conflicting values. Many believe in individualism and the survival of the fittest, at least in an economic sense, while at the same time espousing group loyalty and patriotism. Others laud democracy as a basis for social organization while pointing out that no business could operate effectively without a firm hand at the top (171). Clearly, values may be established at different levels in the motivational hierarchies of different individuals and thus may have varying probabilities of influencing behavior. We are not all subjected to identical cultural learning experiences.

In addition, cultures tend to change their values. The process is without doubt a gradual one, and the conditions which foster it have not been established with any precision. It is known, however, that some individuals experience the change prior to others, so that a culture in transition can hold values which are sharply at variance. Some people have already adopted the new; others retain the old. Certainly the United States at present is in the process of change, and its values are far from universally held (170). The partial Westernization of Japan provides another example (183).

Finally, there are within each culture various subcultures associated with classes, castes, ethnic groups, geographical groupings, etc. Each holds its own set of values, which may or may not coincide exactly with those of the larger unit. Studies indicate that independence and individual initiative are more highly valued among Protestants and Jews than among Catholics in the United States. Similarly, the emphasis on these qualities is more pronounced among the Irish than among those with Italian origins (172). In another study active, future-oriented, individualistic, and nonfatalistic value systems have been found to predominate in the middle and upper classes. Such values are likely to be lacking among people of lower socioeconomic standing (176).

These findings regarding ethnic and social class differences in values have been supported and extended by some research conducted in New Haven, Connecticut (180). Groups with Jewish and Italian origins were compared with respect to a number of values thought to be associated with success and achievement. The Jews were found to place more emphasis on planning for the purpose of controlling one's own destiny, on breaking away from parents and making one's own way in life, on individual credit for accomplishments, and on the perfectibility of man through education and training. The Italians, on the other hand, viewed life in more fatalistic terms, placed more emphasis on continued close family relationships and collective rewards, and considered education less important. In both groups, personal control of one's own destiny, freedom from the family, and individual credit were valued more highly by the people of higher social status.

As these studies indicate, subcultural groups can hold values which are at variance with those of the larger society and thus can contribute to cultural diversity. But smaller social units do not always exhibit this tendency. The Japanese-Americans are a case in point. Like the dominant middle class in the United States they stress politeness, respect for authority, cleanliness, personal achievement, subordination of immediate satisfactions to long-range goals, and community responsibility. Although these values do not derive from the same roots as those of the larger culture (161), the end results are almost identical.

Other studies of various national cultures provide further insight into the nature of values. In one of these, similar groups of insurance clerks in England and America were compared (165). Although politeness and obedience were valued by both groups, they were more important to the British. Self-reliance, kindness, and not creating a nuisance were also more frequently valued in England. The Americans, on the other hand, put a greater emphasis on respect for parents and authority, sincerity, honesty, getting along with others, individuality, and being unselfish.

Another investigation contrasted feelings of obligation to self and society among upper-middle-class German and American boys who were about to enter college (173). In Germany, obligation to oneself tended to be interpreted in terms of concern for rational striving, for participation in individualistic activities, and for the exercise of self-restraint. Toward society there was a strong feeling of duty, a commitment to an idealistic code of decency. The boys brought up in the United States, on the other hand, viewed their obligation to themselves in terms of *personal* striving for success and more or less egocentric self-development. They felt that they owed society more participation in group activities and a greater sensitivity to the opinions of others than the German boys did.

A final study introduces the performance relationship and will thus serve as a bridge to the next section (75). Figures from thirty-four countries throughout the world were analyzed to determine the rapidity of economic development since the mid-1920s. The values of these cultures were then ascertained by coding statements appearing in typical children's readers. A group of these books from the 1920s and another group published around 1950 were obtained from each country. During both periods, the "growth" countries were found to have certain predominant values which could be presumed to have contributed in some manner to their subsequent rapid economic development. One of these values was a type of antitraditionalism: that is, the emphasis on control of the individual by institutions such as the church, government, business, the educational system, and the family was much more pronounced in countries which had experienced relatively little economic development. Another value involved purposefulness in social interaction. In the developing countries it was important that contacts with other people be made with a specific objective in mind. Where this purposefulness in relationships with others was not emphasized, there was likely to be less economic growth, presumably because of reduced efficiency. Finally, the value placed on hard work was much greater in the countries which had progressed more rapidly.

The Performance Relationship

The extent to which different kinds of sanctions are invoked to enforce society's values varies considerably. Some values have been converted into formal statutes and thus receive the support of the whole legal system. Others are perpetuated by informal social pressures and the prospect of ostracism. In general the distinction between these two types seems to be based on the degree of potential threat to the survival of society. Lying is, in itself, not characteristically punishable through legal action, but when it occurs in court under oath and impedes the conduct of justice, it is defined as perjury. Since overt aggression and uncontrolled conflict between members are most likely to result in the eventual dissolution of any social unit (a country as well as a company), legal sanctions are particularly prevalent in this area. Conflicts can easily develop over private property and relationships between the sexes, and for this reason, laws regulating such matters are numerous. Similarly, any kind of physical attack on another member of the society tends to be rigidly proscribed.

The performance effects associated with the codification of society's values derive primarily from the sanctions employed. Fines do not necessarily have any direct impact on a man's work, but extended imprisonment removes him from the employment situation entirely. In addition, the mere fact of conviction may serve to make a man ineffective in certain types of work. A salesman may lose many of his customers, or an individual whose job requires bonding may not be able to meet the conditions. In these cases and others of a similar nature, members of society impose sanctions, whether intended as such or not, beyond those imposed by the courts. Probably the people most vulnerable to this societal pressure are those at the highest levels. Should the financial community lose confidence in a top management because the members have failed to meet cultural values as interpreted in the law, the company may be unable to obtain financing which is necessary to its growth or survival.

This brings us once again to the matter of inappropriate criteria and standards. A salesman may fail because he has come in conflict with society's values and his customers have imposed what amounts to a boycott. In this instance he is clearly ineffective. Inappropriate criteria are not involved. It is also possible, however, that the company may define a man as ineffective on the basis of his failure to abide by cultural values, without any reference to actual performance. The firm may take it for granted that a salesman who runs afoul of the law will automatically be rejected by his customers. Yet this need not be the case. The customers may not learn of his difficulties, or they may not care. It is even conceivable that the fact of conviction might serve to increase acceptance and sales volume. In certain slum neighborhoods, for example, respect for the law is at such a low ebb and illegal behavior so prevalent that a criminal record might prove to be an asset.

The important point is this: The values of the larger society and the requirements for organizational effectiveness do not always coincide exactly. Something can be good or bad in terms of the culture as a whole without having the same implications for company objectives. A man can be guilty of conduct which is at considerable variance with cultural values but continue to make a distinct contribution to his employer. Therefore, when values are invoked as if they were performance criteria, a sizable amount of ineffectiveness by definition will result. In such cases the culture itself plays a strategic role in the failure. And the company may find itself performing in a quasi-legal capacity which is in direct opposition to its role as a business organization.

This is not to say that cultural values and the goals of business enterprise are necessarily conflicting, or that companies do not have to live within the constraints imposed by the legal and ethical systems of the larger society. Clearly, many values, especially those associated with hard work and individual initiative, tend to reinforce employee motivation and thus contribute to a firm's profitability. And the dictates of society serve to proscribe many actions while at the same time indicating the appropriate scope of the economic function. It is society which establishes the rules of the game. Nevertheless, there is no need for an individual firm to go *beyond* the legal sanctions and impose punishments or enforce values in a manner detrimental to organizational goals. Society itself has established appropriate institutions for this purpose.

It is, of course, very difficult for many of us even to imagine establishing policies which might seem to condone behavior that we consider bad. Our first reaction to instances of homosexuality, adultery, atheism, and the like, may be one of disgust, and our initial impulse to get the man as far away from us as possible. Yet if we act on this impulse and terminate employment, we permit our values to assume a strategic role, and performance failure becomes a matter of definition only. The fact that companies and individual managers do this rather frequently is indicative of the great significance which values do hold in motivation.

One of the major factors contributing to decisions of this kind, either at the corporate level or at the level of the individual manager, is the diversity within the larger culture. A worker and his superior may well come from different ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Their conceptions of right and wrong may be sufficiently far apart so that it is almost impossible for one to see why the other acts as he does. The result can be considerable misunderstanding and the application of performance criteria which have little relationship to company objectives. There is reason to believe that occupational success is not infrequently associated with congruence between the values of the individual and those of his superiors. Studies of educational grading practices indicate that where such congruence between teacher and student is lacking, marks are likely to be lower (164).

In summary, cultural values may affect performance directly if they have been converted into statutes. Thus, a man can fail because he goes to prison. Representatives of society can also, through their concerted action in support of widely held beliefs, establish conditions which make effective performance impossible. Furthermore, values may influence performance criteria and standards at either the organizational or group level. To this list should probably be added the case where cultural homogeneity within a group at work leads to the ostracism of a deviant individual who fails to live up to the standards of right and wrong held by his fellows. The rejected person may be unable to weather this process emotionally, and his work may suffer.

But a major source of difficulty, quite independent of the group, the organization, or even of the direct action of society as a whole, involves the influence of cultural values on the specific actions of the people who fail. A man may become ineffective because the values derived from his culture lead him to act in ways which are inconsistent with the demands of his job. A conflict develops between cultural directives as perceived by the individual and work requirements. In such cases the man may continue to live by his values and so fail on the job. Or he may attempt to overcome these cultural imperatives and comply with the demands of his position, only to experience considerable guilt and shame. Probably the most common reaction involves both kinds of behavior. The man gets very upset and finds it impossible to concentrate on his work, and at the same time he tries to diminish his emotional distress by avoiding certain job activities which he considers particularly bad. Prolonged stress of this kind can contribute to either a neurosis or a psychosis.

The following example, although hypothetical, could occur. Suppose that a man because of his cultural origins has long accepted the dictate that the masculine sex should demand obedience of "the weaker sex." Unexpectedly, he finds himself reporting to a female boss. He believes it is bad to permit a woman to direct his activities, just as many young sons consider obedience to their mothers a sign of weakness and inferiority. But at the same time he wants to progress in his work and do a good job. The outcome might be a series of outbursts directed at his new boss. On the other hand, he might attempt to adopt a more subservient attitude, only to find himself so overcome with shame that he cannot keep his mind on his work. Perhaps he might alternate between attempts to demonstrate his superiority and periods of submission during which frequent errors occur in his work.

Specific Values Influencing Those Who Fail

Although the example above provides a helpful initial illustration, it is rather atypical. There are similar beliefs, however, which in the writer's experience are particularly likely to contribute to performance failure. This section will take up some of these instances in considerable detail. Of course, the values noted, necessarily represent only a sample of the conceptions regarding right and wrong which individuals can bring into the workplace to the detriment of their performance.

One such strategic factor is the value placed on equity or fair play in the United States. Parents characteristically teach their children the concept at an early age, although they often come to regret it as they are besieged with appeals to their own sense of fairness. It is unfair that one child should get something another does not get. It is unfair to break a promise, whether implied or stated. It is unfair to require something that other parents do not require. The examples can be multiplied many times for both children and adults.

At work, difficulties frequently arise when the company or an immediate superior acts in a way which makes a man feel that he has been treated unjustly. If the man is merely attempting to blame others for his own shortcomings, there is, of course, no relationship to the culture. Efforts to find a scapegoat often look very much like value problems, but they are not. If the man feels he has been treated unfairly, however, *and* most people who share his cultural background would tend to support him, then the causation probably goes beyond the level of the individual and becomes social in nature.

It is important to emphasize that infringement of the sense of fair play need not have an impact on performance. Many people who experience numerous inequities do not decline in effectiveness. They may even become quite upset about the wrongs done them without permitting their work to suffer. But in some cases the value of fairness is held with such intensity or the provocation is so flagrant that performance failure does occur. This may happen in two ways. The man may become convinced that he is justified in expressing his dissatisfaction, or even that he is obligated to do so. As a result he stirs up other employees, refuses to do his own work, and in general becomes uncooperative and difficult to deal with. On the other hand, he may resort to defenses such as repression and denial in an effort to blot out the sources of his anger and the impulses which they arouse. There is convincing evidence that this response to inequitable treatment is widely utilized among Negroes in the southern part of the United States (169). It can contribute to severe emotional illness and to the performance effects noted in Chapter 3.

The potential causes of such reactions in industry are many: unfulfilled promises regarding conditions of employment, promotion of a man with considerably less seniority, discriminatory treatment because of sex or race, insufficient recognition for services performed, inequities in payment, etc. Among union-represented employees the grievance system provides a sanctioned outlet for the feelings thus aroused, and for that reason there may be a continuing flood of formal complaints where inequitable conditions are believed to exist. There is a tendency among some management groups to interpret these high grievance rates as indicative of union pressure tactics having little relationship to actual employee feelings. This, of course, can be entirely correct. But it is probable that value problems, and in particular, violations of the sense of fair play, represent a much more common cause. One inequity perpetrated against a single man can produce a whole series of grievances, as well as extensive work stoppage. Others who hold the same values as the aggrieved man can be expected to react emotionally as he does, and there is a good chance that they will take up his cause.

Another value which appears to have major implications for performance is individual freedom. In the United States it is widely held that a person should, within very broad limits, be permitted as much freedom as possible to live in accordance with his own desires. This is so much a part of the entire culture that it has been codified in the Bill of Rights. Yet studies indicate that there are sizable differences in the importance of this value for people entering upon different careers (177). Architecture, journalism, drama, art, natural and social science, advertising, public relations, engineering, and teaching seem to attract those who value freedom highly. Sales promotion, hotel management, real estate, finance, personnel, government service, and general business do so to a much lesser extent. Furthermore, the value is apparently more strongly held among those employed on university faculties than in most other segments of society. Academic freedom is without question a potent factor on the campus. It is frequently employed as a guide to decision making and policy formulation within the university community, and it is defended with a great deal of vigor.

In the business world the emphasis on freedom is probably most pronounced among physical scientists engaged in research and development activities. It is marked in a number of other business occupations as well, but the scientists appear to represent the largest group. Most have been exposed to long periods of university training as undergraduate and graduate students. A number have been employed on faculties at one time or another. In addition, much of the work is creative and intellectual in nature, and it is among intellectuals that freedom appears to be valued most highly in American society. An especially strong commitment to freedom might be considered characteristic of the whole scientific subculture.

This value clearly has functional importance for the work of the industrial scientist. For one thing, it permits statements of the "I don't know" type which are so essential to the formulation of problems for research. To be maximally effective the scientist must be free to investigate problems even though they may appear to have been solved already, and in spite of the fact that immediate applications may not be evident (175).

But the matter of problem formulation is not the only reason why freedom is essential for scientific productivity. The creative process itself is affected. A detailed analysis of what occurs when novel scientific ideas are developed suggests that a number of conditions are necessary (181). There must be strong motivation in the area of learning and ideas. This must be wedded to intense excitement, which is anticipated and experienced when creative effort is in progress. Excitement of this kind appears to be the crucial emotional factor in the motivation of creative work, making it possible for the scientist to return again and again to his problem in a manner suggestive of a sizable stubborn streak. To this must be added a quality which no doubt strikes many people as a sort of conceited negativism—the capacity to reject or ignore consistently the directives and conclusions of others. The result may be that the most creative scientists are likely to have a detrimental effect on the work of their associates. Hostility to the ideas of others and singleness of purpose appear to be essential conditions for the pursuit of new solutions, but they do not always make for close friendships or serve to encourage competitive scientific efforts.

Actual studies of creative and original individuals tend to support these conclusions (160). Such people prefer complexity, uncertainty, and disorder in the world of ideas presumably because of the opportunity provided for imposing a new order on things themselves. They are self-assertive, tend to express their emotions rather freely, and reject regulation by others. They are relatively nonconforming (162). There is also reason to believe that the creative scientist is so strongly dedicated to the future that mundane affairs of the present are often ignored (174, 182). This orientation may be coupled with a rather extreme degree of confidence that events will occur in accordance with his wishes, intentions, and expectations.

Creative and effective scientific performance, then, is likely to occur in conjunction with intellectual preoccupation, intense excitement, stubbornness, hostility, conceit, a contentious and perhaps domineering, attitude, deviance, a dislike of the orderly and correct, freedom of emotional expression, and a tendency to live in the future. Many of these qualities are suggestive of an individual who is not always easy to get along with. Yet most of them appear to be essential to really effective performance in research positions. An environment which would restrict or suppress these tendencies would almost certainly eliminate creativity at the same time. It is not surprising, therefore, that scientists value individual freedom so highly.

How, then, does a strong concern for freedom contribute to ineffective performance? As has been noted, the creative scientist can have a negative impact on the work of others. The quantity and quality of his work may be outstanding, and at the same time he can stir up all kinds of dissension in the laboratory. His constant stream of new ideas may be matched by a complete lack of creative accomplishment among those who work with him. His hostility to proposals which are in any way antithetical to his own may have a stifling effect on younger and less experienced men. In spite of their emphasis on individual freedom, creative people may well not exhibit much tolerance of others, at least in the realm of ideas.

Secondly, the concern with freedom, together with the personality characteristics which this releases and fosters, may conflict with job demands other than those in the area of creative production. Any company requires a degree of cooperative effort in order to survive. Loyalty and a willingness to acquiesce in the decisions of others are essential to this kind of cooperative effort. These factors assume particular importance in research establishments, because the people employed there often possess knowledge which, if it became available to competitors, could have an adverse effect on company profits. The generally high turnover among scientific personnel only serves to accentuate this problem. Thus the loyalty of research scientists is a constant source of concern to many industrial managers. As a result, multiple controls are often installed to ensure against a breakdown of cooperative effort. Sometimes the rewards that the company has to offer are bestowed for long service, obedience to authority, friendliness, and conformity rather than creative research. In such instances the danger is that success as defined by the company becomes available only to those who are really less effective—to those who have given up their values and their creativity.

This conflict between the scientific role, with its high valuation of freedom and creativity, and the role of a company member, with its emphasis on cooperation and loyalty, is apparently felt most intensely by the younger men (179). Some may resolve it by what may appear as an extreme devotion to freedom and nonconformity. Some may resolve it by leaving the company entirely. Others may not really resolve it at all, and may experience intense and continuing emotions which make effective work impossible. In such people guilt and anxiety tend to predominate, but intense outbursts of anger may also occur.

It is important to emphasize a factor which has already been implied in the preceding discussion. The products of creative work are by definition products which a particular culture values. Merely being new and different need not constitute creativity (178). This means that cultural values tend to channel and define creative effort. For many hundreds of years the only truly great art produced in Europe was of a religious nature, because religious values were paramount. Thus a culture can serve to limit, direct, or even abolish creativity. Similarly, a company can establish performance standards and criteria and provide rewards in such a way as to ensure the almost complete absence of original work. There are companies which have been investing huge sums in research for years, yet have never come up with a really new product or process. In some such instances the whole research effort might be considered ineffective.

In addition to equity and freedom, there are other values of a more strictly moral nature which can affect performance. Often these have roots in early religious training. The proscription against killing is of this type. Many people in the armed services during wartime develop severe emotional disorders when caught between the demands of combat assignments and their cultural values (38). Many more either do not fire their weapons or deliberately miss. Even further removed from conflict and guilt are conscientious objectors and pacifists, who are permitted to follow their values and religious teachings by serving entirely outside the framework of the armed forces. In all these cases the individuals find it impossible to suspend their moral principles during wartime.

This is not purely a military problem, however. Similar difficulties can arise in the manufacture of products which might be used either to fight a war or to take human life under any other circumstances. Those who hold strong values regarding killing may well refuse to do certain kinds of work which they consider bad. At such times a man may show considerable reticence regarding the cause of his refusal; his reaction can appear quite irrational. Or should he attempt to continue in work of this kind in spite of his values, there is a good chance that he will fail. The guilt aroused by continued exposure to a situation which he can only view as sinful tends to make effective performance very difficult. Sporadic attempts at escape may also result in considerable absenteeism.

It is possible for performance to be affected even when the work's relationship to killing seems quite indirect to other people. The writer knows of instances where young men employed on research projects in the area of military screening and placement have not been able to do the work because of strongly held values. All were competent individuals with outstanding academic records and histories of satisfactory employment. But while working on the military research they seemed to feel that they were contributing to the development of personnel procedures which could ultimately serve only to perfect the art of killing on a grand scale. As a result they became preoccupied with guilt, to the point where one man with advanced training in mathematics failed over and over in attempting to add a column of figures on a desk calculator.

Values in the area of sexual morality may operate in a similar manner. In some work environments, four-letter words are heard rather frequently, and there is a good deal of joking along sexual lines. To certain people with strong feelings about such matters, these environments represent a major source of distress. The result may be a decrement in performance because the man feels guilt by association. More frequently he will become irritable, argumentative, and critical of his fellow workers. On occasion he may berate the group en masse, with a generally disruptive effect. Eventually people of this kind may be expected to resign, but not before they have heaped condemnation on everyone around.

There may also be value conflicts associated with feelings about honesty. No doubt some jobs require their incumbents to engage in sharp practices, to lie, and perhaps even to behave in ways which are clearly illegal. But these are presumably rare. It is more common for a man to *view* his work as basically dishonest and thus to either avoid certain aspects of it or experience guilt while performing it. The borderline between good and bad is often hard to establish precisely, and those with strong values can easily accentuate things which to others might appear quite appropriate. This is apparently a common problem among salesmen (46), since for some people the whole selling and advertising process comes to represent a colossal racket, an attempt to steal the money of others by forcing them to buy a worthless product which they do not want and cannot use. Should a person with such beliefs, and with strong values regarding honesty and humanitarian behavior, find himself in a sales position, he may well become obsessed by guilt. The resulting impact on performance is not entirely predictable, but it is unlikely to be positive. The man may fail to carry out those duties which he considers dishonest. He may quit. His guilt may interfere directly with his work, even to the point where he fails deliberately in order to expiate his sin. Or he may condemn the company to his customers and point out every conceivable defect in the products he is supposed to be selling.

Something similar can occur merely as a result of being employed in a competitive profit-making organization. Many people whose values lead them to consider the business world reprehensible avoid employment in it, but some are attracted by money or other factors and thus deliberately expose themselves to a work environment in which they are likely to fail. The man who, because of a certain subculture membership or some other factor, holds strong liberal values, is almost certain to face considerable difficulty if he enters an organization which represents the essence of capitalism and private investment for profit. The situation is not unlike that of the pacifist who enters military service. Luckily for the individuals involved and for many managers, a high proportion of those who begin college with the intention of preparing for business, and who have a value conflict of the type described, subsequently change their minds and enter some other type of occupation. Among those who do follow through on their original plans, there are many who adapt their values to their new environment (177). Where neither of these occur, the probability of performance failure is high.

Possible Types of Managerial Action

Problems created by value conflicts are among the most difficult a manager faces. Many are beyond his power to solve. This is certainly true where a subordinate has been imprisoned for a crime. It is usually also true when society acts through boycott or other concerted action to deprive a man of the customers, bonding, financing, etc., required for effective performance. At such times the only feasible method of retaining the man in the company at all is to transfer him to a position where he is less vulnerable to the effects of public action and censure. Whether this is an appropriate solution depends largely on the reactions of the people with whom he would work inside the company and on his response to ostracism, if it should occur. Normally, successful transfers of this kind are more easily accomplished with lower-level personnel than with those in the top positions. There are few jobs in the upper echelons of any organization which do not have a high degree of public visibility.

Where cultural values are involved in cases of failure by definition only the solutions are similar to those used when cultural values do not play a part (see Chapters 7 and 8). The only difference is that inappropriate criteria and standards, whether introduced at the organizational level or by the immediate supervisor, are particularly resistant to change if they derive from the cultural heritage, since there is likely to be widespread support for the action. A manager who fires a man because he finds him personally repugnant may have few supporters. A manager who fires a man for immorality or Communist sympathies is likely to become somewhat of a hero. Public pressure will rarely be exerted to produce a change in inappropriate criteria which arise from value considerations. As a result the possibilities for change are drastically reduced. The same conclusion holds for ostracism by a group. It is very hard to change individuals or groups when there are a hundred others who will applaud them.

When ineffective performance derives from a conflict between a person's values and job demands, similar difficulties arise. It is safe to assume that in cases of this kind a very strong motive is involved—a motive dominant enough, in fact, to win over all others which might militate *against* ineffective performance. In view of its cultural origins, this motive can furthermore be assumed to have widespread public support. The combination of the two factors makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to change cultural values once they have caused failure on the job. The values held by an individual do change, of course, but if this is likely it will probably occur long before performance is drastically affected. The presence of really unsatisfactory performance attributable to a value problem provides convincing evidence that modifications were not and probably are not possible.

This means that any change which is to produce adequate performance will normally have to be made in the job rather than in the individual. Usually this involves transfer to some other kind of work where the specific values responsible for failure will not be activated, although a change in the conditions of the present job may be possible on occasion. Unfortunately, many value responses involve factors which are almost universal within a firm and which cannot be changed. The individual whose liberal, anticapitalistic values are strategic for failure will benefit little from transfer to some other job in the company. Similarly, the scientist who requires an environment where there is greater respect for individual freedom is unlikely to find it anywhere else in the organization if it does not exist in the research establishment. Problems involving moral values can normally be handled by transfer, but not always. Salesmen who cannot live with their own "dishonesty" will usually improve if shifted to a position far removed from sales. And the man who is disturbed by the sexual immorality of his fellow workers can usually be placed where these problems do not arise, or where they are at least minimized. But the man who works for a defense contractor may not be able to get his negative image of the firm and of his own work out of his mind no matter what his specific assignment. Where value factors are strategic, there are clearly many cases which are best handled by dismissal or by trying to induce the man to resign.

The matter of inequity requires a somewhat more detailed discussion. When a subordinate reacts to what he considers unfair treatment with sulking, resentment, and decreased work efficiency, it is generally best for a manager to bring the problem into the open if the man has not done so. A lengthy conversation may not solve the problem, but it is unlikely that a solution will be found without it. At such times a detailed, logical explanation of why the action was taken should be presented. This need not be merely a series of excuses: Some inequities or seeming inequities are inevitable, and others, like promotion on the basis of merit rather than length of service, are even desirable from a managerial viewpoint. Most people will appreciate an explanation, however, and will at least partially accept a logical analysis. Certainly this is more likely to minimize future trouble and ineffective performance than a rigid insistence on managerial prerogatives in such matters.

If the logical explanation is not accepted and the resentment continues or perhaps is even accentuated, a number of possibilities remain. One is that the action was in fact unnecessarily unfair and that therefore the attempted logical explanation fell flat. If so, every effort should be made to rectify the situation in order to restore effective performance. It may also be that the matter is more emotional than cultural in nature. The individual may feel that he is being persecuted in many ways and may be unwilling to approach his problems in a rational manner. In such cases a discussion may not do much to solve the difficulty, but it can contribute information which makes it easier for the manager to distinguish between emotional and cultural causations. Another possibility is that the manager's values and those of the subordinate are so far apart that there is no common ground on which a solution can be built. At such times transfer is appropriate. If a man can be made effective by being assigned to a manager whose values are more congruent with his own, then the change should certainly be made.

It has been noted that on occasion people modify their value systems to be in greater accord with vocational aspirations and actualities. Research indicates this is a much less common response to value conflict than a shift in occupational choice, but it clearly does occur (177). The major determinant appears to be the existence of some motive which is of greater personal importance than the original value. Thus change, when it does occur, becomes largely a matter of expediency. If a man holds strong liberal values but also wants the money or prestige which he believes is available in a business career, he may change his conception of the good economic system if his two motives come in conflict. In other words, he gradually adjusts his beliefs so that they do not force him to give up what he wants even more.

In the same way, when a motive becomes strong throughout large segments of a society, a great many people may change their values in order to satisfy the motive. When we need to protect our whole way of life, as during wartime, we may change many values which seem to conflict with this objective. Some of the changes are merely temporary; others are permanent. The idea that a woman's place is in the home disappeared almost entirely with World War II. The proportionate number of women holding full-time positions increased markedly in response to the requirements of war, but the figure is now much higher than it ever was during the war years. As the external factors impinging on a society change and establish pressures for the adoption of new methods, the conditions which foster cultural adaptation are created. Value change, in the individual and in the aggregate, would appear to be largely a mater of expediency—a mechanism adopted in order to protect and satisfy even more important values and motives.

10

SITUATIONAL FORCES

This chapter moves to a heterogeneous group of factors which differ in several important respects from those previously discussed. Chapters 2 through 5 dealt with aspects of the ineffective performer himself—with his individual characteristics. In Chapters 6 through 9 the focus shifted to the groups in which a subordinate typically holds membership. The remaining strategic factors, which are basically of two kinds, form the subject of this chapter. In the first case, performance is influenced by social forces operating independently of an individual's own group associations. Other people in their roles as members of other groups behave in ways having important implications for a man's effectiveness. In the second case, various characteristics of the physical situation in which the work is carried out operate as strategic influences.

These individual actions, or social forces, external to the man's own membership groups and the features of his physical environment make up this final group of factors contributing to performance failure. For lack of a better word, these determinants have been called situational, although a strict interpretation of the term would also include the aspects of the social environment discussed in Chapters 6 through 9.

Some of the situational forces noted in this chapter are basically economic in nature. They include the condition of the labor market as it affects the availability of employment, the impact of competing firms on the performance of specific individuals, and certain governmental actions which have economic implications. They also include union policies and decisions made at the level of the international union or of the labor movement as a whole.

A second group of situational forces is primarily geographical. Aspects of climate and topography can combine with emotional or physical factors to influence performance in important ways. So too can the degree of isolation of the environment in which the work is carried out and the novelty or strangeness which the situation presents. The factor of strangeness is allied to that of separation discussed in Chapter 6. For some people it is not so much the removal from loved ones which produces performance failure after reassignment, but the threat of the new and unknown itself.

This chapter will also deal with the various conditions besides the social determinants noted previously, which may operate in the workplace itself. Noise, lighting, and temperature are particularly important. Also significant in many jobs are the design and operating condition of equipment employed in carrying out the work. In this connection we will take up some of the research being carried out in the rapidly expanding field of human engineering or engineering psychology.

Subsequent sections will be devoted to various consequences associated with the degree of danger which actually exists or which the worker perceives in the work environment. Accident causation and safety will be discussed at some length, and special attention will be given to accident proneness. This factor might have been treated in earlier chapters, but it appears to fit particularly well into an analysis of the role which situational danger has in performance failure. Finally, the subjective danger situation, which influences work effectiveness primarily because of the emotions and motives aroused, will be presented in a discussion parallel to that of Chapter 3 on emotions. The treatment here will develop more fully the contribution of unconscious motivation to situationally specific fear reactions, however. Since the corrective actions applicable to the diverse factors covered in this chapter are in themselves quite varied, they will be taken up as they become appropriate rather than in a separate section.

Economic Forces

How, specifically, do the influences operating in the economic environment surrounding a firm affect the performance of individuals? One such factor, the level of employment existing during a given period, has implications primarily for the way in which standards are established. Just as under tight labor-force conditions standards may be adjusted downward to ensure that someone will be available to fill essential positions, so under reverse conditions standards may be shifted up. When it is easy to hire a replacement and the chances are good that the new man will be satisfactory, there is some tendency to tighten up on current employees and expect more of them. Labor-market conditions of this kind eliminate one factor which normally serves to deter management from firing in cases of ineffectiveness. Thus raised standards of performance may be instituted as a preliminary to dismissal or demotion, on the assumption that the job can easily be filled from among the unemployed. In the

United States, however, unemployment tends to strike primarily at the less well educated and those with minimal or obsolescent skills. Occupational surpluses in highly skilled, managerial, and professional jobs have not occurred since the 1930s. Thus this type of situational factor is most likely to be present when the subordinate holds a job toward the bottom of the occupational hierarchy and when his particular position is on the verge of extinction.

Depressed economic conditions may also operate directly on the employee himself to produce a change in his work. In territories where unemployment is high and income levels low, it is not uncommon for salesmen to become so disillusioned and upset that they are unable to regain their former effectiveness when improvements in income levels do occur. In the Pittsburgh area, for instance, sizable reductions in retail purchases result whenever there is a strike in the steel industry. The impact on sales and salesmen can be considerable, even when managerial expectations are adjusted to existing conditions. Many young and inexperienced men intent on setting the world on fire interpret their declining figures as indicative of personal incompetence and become very disturbed. Unable to meet their own standards, they either quit prematurely or adopt an attitude of fatalistic helplessness; a few become really emotionally ill. Depressed areas have ruined many a promising sales career, and even experienced men are not entirely immune. A continued inability to make sales is likely to be viewed as a personal defeat by any salesman, although in a rational sense it may be difficult to imagine how more could have been done under the circumstances.

Something very similar may also occur at the top levels of a company. The officers may be at the mercy of situational influences and thus unable to return a profit, yet the emotional impact of these economic conditions, over which they cannot possibly exercise control, may be sufficient to incapacitate them almost completely. A few may resort to dishonest and illegal actions at such times; many more fail because of the direct influence of negative emotional states on performance. The incidence of emotional disorder and suicide attributable to the stock market crash of 1929 was by no means infinitesimal. Of course, the tendency to adjust standards to existing conditions diminishes at these higher levels. A company officer, like a football or baseball coach, may be held accountable for losses irrespective of his actual control over the situation. Thus, many an executive of outstanding capacity has been dismissed in time of economic recession because standards were not adjusted to reflect the possible.

These effects need not result from conditions existing throughout the local or national economy, however. Individual competitors may break through and take away sizable segments of a market with equally detrimental consequences for those immediately affected. A new and superior product or advertising campaign, a sharp reduction in prices, some particularly effective salesmanship—any of these may give a competing firm a major advantage, even if only temporarily. The salesman who suffers heavy losses in business under such circumstances may respond with emotional and motivational changes which have serious consequences for his performance in the future. Just as in wartime actions of the enemy contribute to emotional and motivational states which preclude effective performance levels, so in a capitalistic society competing companies may disable members of the opposition. The casualty rate is not likely to be as high, and the incidence of strictly physical disabilities (and deaths) can be presumed to be minimal, yet there is no question but that economic as well as military conflicts can take a heavy toll among the contestants.

Insofar as actions taken by the various governments, either Federal, state, or local, intrude upon the economic arena, these too may become strategic for failure. So also may union activities initiated above the immediate shop level. The impact is again likely to be particularly marked at the top of the organization, but interested specialists such as company lawyers, tax men, and labor relations experts may also be affected. The fact that union negotiations break down and a strike results, or that an antitrust action is successfully prosecuted against the company, can have important implications for the future performance of those intimately involved. Failure to measure up to personal expectations at such times can have a severe emotional and motivational impact on some people, even if they have met the standards established by the company.

In cases of this kind every effort should be made to bring the man's personal standards into line with actual ones. If he can be convinced that he has not failed, that the economic circumstances, or actions of a competitor, or governmental forces, or union decisions were beyond his control, a rapid improvement in performance can be expected. It may be, of course, that the man himself was partially responsible for the way events developed but still is overreacting with unfortunate consequences for his current work. This makes the job of reestablishing effective performance more difficult. He must be helped to realize that irrespective of events in the past, his present competence is what counts. A small dose of success can do wonders if it can be provided.

In more severe instances, the anxiety, shame, or depression produced by the sense of personal failure may be sufficient to constitute a true emotional disorder or to invoke other symptoms indicative of a neurosis or psychosis. At such times the solutions discussed in Chapter 3 are appropriate. The reactions may be expected to assume such inflexibility that it would be almost impossible for a manager to realign the man's personal and actual standards. He will remain convinced of his inadequacy no matter what his superiors say or do. His overt behavior may, however, represent an attempt at denial, making it difficult to determine exactly what did provoke the disorder.

It is also important, where economic forces have operated to produce failure, that the forces be removed quickly, if at all possible. A salesman who is overreacting to the impact of depressed conditions or aggressive competition ideally should be shifted to a territory where there is some possibility of success. At the same time an attempt should be made to counteract any feeling he may have that accepting the transfer represents an admission of defeat. Unfortunately, this kind of solution is not generally available for top-level executives and staff specialists. For them there is, with rare exceptions, no appropriate "new territory" where a feeling of success and a revival of effective performance can occur. The chances of solving problems of failure short of dismissal or demotion are consequently reduced when such people are involved.

Geographic Location of Work

Many of the strategic factors involving geographic considerations are obvious. Climatic conditions, for instance, can be so severe as to have a physically detrimental effect on performance. Similarly, rough topography can have considerable significance in industries which are based on the extraction and development of natural resources. In these cases, however, where nearly all men could be expected to suffer some decrement in effectiveness, standards are usually adjusted to take the situation into account. A laborer is not generally expected to perform at the same level in the tropics as he would in a more temperate climate.

Where emotional and physical reactions to these factors differ among individuals, however, true performance failure may occur. Some people become severely sick whenever they board a ship. Whether the basic causation is physical or emotional, they are incapable of effective work in any job requiring them to spend much time at sea. Similarly, some people develop severe and incapacitating sinus or bronchial conditions in cold, wet climates. Reactions of an essentially emotional nature can occur with extended exposure to extreme conditions, such as those existing in the arctic or in the equatorial jungles and deserts. Environments like these contribute to severe and lasting depressive states in some people, although others are left unscathed. In part, the emotional reactions appear to be precipitated by the isolation which characterizes such regions. But without question the rigors of existence and the deprivations occasioned by climatic conditions can also be strategic.

Under conditions of this kind it may be possible to treat the disorder and so restore effective performance. Medicine has been increasingly successful in developing drugs and other procedures which will permit individuals to continue living in harsh environments. Should treatment prove inadequate, however, it is best to remove the person from the situation as soon as possible. Many men who were unable to adjust to isolated assignments in extreme climates during wartime recovered rapidly when returned to the United States (38). This solution is particularly appropriate where the situational reaction is primarily emotional.

In discussing family ties as causes of performance failure, Chapter 6 devoted considerable space to the matter of separation. Some people fail because they are assigned to jobs which remove them from emotionally important family (and other group) associations for long periods of time. Very similar reactions can also occur as a result of separation from a familiar *environment* and exposure to a new situation. In such cases a thorough discussion with the man is usually required to determine whether it is the separation from his family which disturbs him or the novelty and strangeness of the environment in which he finds himself. Generally, with sufficient patience it is not difficult to distinguish between the two.

The problems associated with being in new and strange situations appear most frequently after assignment to work in a foreign country. The shock of facing numbers of people whose customs seem unintelligible and with whom communication is difficult because of language barriers can be overwhelming. Satisfying the simplest personal wants becomes a complex problem—getting a meal, making arrangements to have laundry done, finding a toilet, etc. The strangeness of everything, the potential for getting into embarrassing situations, and the sense of being unwanted provide fertile ground for the development of emotional disorder. So too do the value conflicts inevitably aroused by the demands of an alien culture.

Experience with U.S. government employees in overseas assignments indicates that emotional problems are most likely to develop in wives who have reached middle age and who have spent most of their lives in some stable American community. The men are relatively less vulnerable, probably because their work remains much the same even though the environment in which it is carried out has changed drastically. Alcoholism is a particularly common response to the stress of a strange country and unfamiliar situation. Various types of physical disorders of emotional origin can also be expected. Many of these make normal behavior of the kind required for effective work performance quite impossible for long periods of time. Although psychoses are not excessively prevalent, neuroses, especially those with anxiety and depression predominating, are. In most cases the symptoms appear for the first time during the period of foreign service; the individual has usually been emotionally and physically healthy up to that point (193).

These reactions are not, of course, unique to the foreign situation. They can occur within the United States itself when a person is uprooted from a familiar environment. The move from a rural area to a large city is probably the most frequent source of difficulty, since the population flow from farm to urban factory continues. Rush-hour crowds, subways, traffic jams, and self-service elevators can be almost as disconcerting as a foreign culture. But even the move from a city in which one has grown up and become adjusted to another which presents a new problem of adaptation can cause emotional upset and performance failure in some people.

In general, the solutions in cases of ineffectiveness caused by novel situations parallel those noted in Chapter 6 for family separation. It is important to get the man out of the place and back to familiar ground as soon as possible. Ideally, screening would prevent or reduce such occurrences, both in the employee himself and in other family members.

There is, however, another valuable solution available in the situationally caused cases, especially those involving foreign assignment. People can be prepared for the new situation so that when they are actually exposed, the shock is partially absorbed. Ideally, men sent on trips or permanent assignments to places where they have never been should be given as much information about what to expect as can be provided. They should be told about the various situations they may face, and they should be given a chance to think about how they might react. Culture and language training should be provided before the move actually occurs.

In cases where companies send large numbers of employees into societies very different from America, as the large oil companies do in the Near East and Venezuela, the benefits to be derived from special company-sponsored training programs ought to be considerable. Attendance should be open to the members of the employee's family. Training should be conducted by area and language experts hired for this purpose, as well as by company employees who have worked in the unfamiliar country. Participants could be given an opportunity to play the roles that they will assume in their new environment. In this way they can explore and become familiar with their own reactions and emotions before actual exposure to the situation occurs. This procedure will almost certainly result in a sizable reduction in the number of men returned from foreign assignments as a result of performance failure. It should pay for itself and much more.

The Physical Working Environment

Such factors as noise, illumination, atmospheric conditions, and equipment characteristics, although they can affect performance acutely, tend to have a more or less uniform impact on everyone exposed to them. Where the workplace provides a detrimental environment, standards will generally be adjusted downward to fit the situational context, and therefore ineffectiveness will not become prevalent. What variations in reaction do occur are more a consequence of individual characteristics than of situational aspects. Consequently, performance failure attributable to factors in the physical working environment can be expected only when an individual suffers in addition from some physical or other individual deficiency which makes him particularly sensitive to the effects of the deleterious working conditions, or in those relatively rare cases where the group as a whole is not exposed to the conditions in a uniform manner.

In a few instances also, management may be unaware that factors in the physical working environment are contributing to performance decrements and so may fail to adjust standards accordingly. Thus, men can be considered ineffective when machines have been inappropriately designed or are operating improperly, if the locus of error is incorrectly assumed to be in the operators themselves. Similarly, a manager's failure to recognize the effects that noise, temperature, and other conditions have on performance can cause them to become strategic. It is important, therefore, to discuss these factors here if only to sensitize managers to their consequences so that identification may be more easily accomplished.

Excessive noise affects performance in two ways. It can serve to mask speech, making communication difficult and misunderstandings frequent. It can also interfere directly with the performance of tasks requiring concentration. Mental work is affected primarily, but manual activities are not immune (187). Studies indicate that errors and the quality of work produced are influenced most. Noise has little impact on quantity, and steps taken to make the workplace quieter are unlikely to bring about a higher rate of output (184). Of course, another effect of noise if it is sufficiently intense is that damage to the ear can occur and permanently impair hearing.

Where it is suspected that excessive noise is present in the workplace, an acoustical engineer should be consulted. The problems of measurement and control are complex and require specialized assistance. Noise reduction is ideally accomplished by elimination at the source through revised design of machinery or through lubrication, replacement of worn parts, and changes in mountings. Sometimes it is possible to isolate intense sounds by constructing barriers. The most common procedure is to employ acoustical materials as a means of absorbing sound and reducing vibration. Where none of these are possible or practicable, ear protection devices can be used (195).

Illumination levels are equally important for performance and, because the conditions under which various individuals work can differ even within the same room, the potential contribution to ineffectiveness is somewhat greater than for noise. In a number of instances output rates before and after a major lighting change have been compared. In one case where the original lighting was very poor, a 35 percent improvement in the quantity of work produced was achieved (195). Normally the change with more adequate lighting is not as great, but productivity increases of 3 to 15 percent, combined with sizable reductions in the number of errors and accidents, are not uncommon. Improvements in performance can also be expected when glare is removed or reduced to a minimum.

Among the various atmospheric conditions, temperature has been the most extensively studied (187, 195). In general, work decrements may be expected to occur in the vicinity of 90°. These will increase as temperatures rise above that level and as humidity increases. Complex physical tasks are affected most. Cold has similar consequences: At 32° a decrement of about 20 percent from the level of performance at room temperature can be expected. Below 0° the impact becomes pronounced. Other atmospheric factors which appear less frequently include oxygen lack at high altitudes, rapid reduction of barometric pressure such as may occur during work under water (creating the "bends"), and noxious gases and vapors that become concentrated because of poor ventilation.

In view of the advent of the space age, the effects of rapid acceleration should probably also be mentioned. Aircraft can be constructed with tolerances which far exceed those of the human operator. This means that a man can easily expose himself to acceleration stresses beyond his physiological limits. Sensory performance, especially vision, is affected quickly. Continued acceleration can produce "blackout" and death (195).

Another source of performance decrement and perhaps failure is associated with the amount of information coming to a person from his environment. It is possible to overload a man, to expect too much of him. This is not intended in an emotional sense, but rather refers to limitations on the human capacity to take in information through the senses. We can make correct judgments regarding only a certain number of different things at once. After a point the error rate climbs rapidly. Imagine, for instance, trying to listen to and participate in five separate telephone conversations at one time. There are similar limits on the span of immediate memory. The human capacity to bring previously achieved knowledge to bear on a current problem is not infinite (196). Thus, the situation can make demands which inevitably result in poor-quality performance. Failures for reasons such as these are presumably rare in the business world, because it is usually possible to delay environmental demands and schedule them so that they do not all have to be handled at once. Overloading can occur, however, in new and unstandardized situations which require simultaneous attention to many details. With the increasing use of automated systems of production, such problems may be expected to arise with greater frequency.

Closely related is the matter of equipment design and maintenance. A machine can demand more of the operator's strength, muscular speed, coordination and dexterity, perceptual speed, visual competence, or auditory capacities than he can possibly provide. Similarly, the design may be incompatible with the size and proportions of a specific individual. Human engineering aims at achieving optimal conditions in terms of adapting equipment to the operator. Where such design and operating conditions are not achieved, and managerial standards are not adjusted, failure becomes a possibility.

An example of the way in which equipment characteristics may influence performance levels is provided by a study of various instrument dial scales (189). In this instance horizontal, vertical, and circular scales were compared in terms of the frequency with which erroneous readings occurred. The vertical scale yielded by far the most mistakes. Also, extreme errors were more marked on the vertical scale; on the other two they were negligible. On all scales errors were most frequent toward the ends and least frequent in the central range. Nevertheless, in spite of the differences found in association with design characteristics, the major source of variability was still the human being. Individual error rates independent of scale differences varied from 3 to 70 percent of the readings made. Thus individual characteristics appear to remain crucial, even though situational forces are relevant.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to offer the reader any developed theory in this area. A great many studies have been conducted which bear upon engineering problems, but general principles are still few in number (198). The manager who suspects that factors of this type are contributing to performance failures among his subordinates should consult the various books which describe these studies (187, 195). To attempt to review them adequately here would require space out of proportion to the significance of equipment characteristics in ineffective performance.

One other way in which equipment-related factors can contribute to failure should be noted, however. In connection with some research into employee reactions in an automated power plant and in a comparable plant with conventional equipment, it was found that increased feelings of tension and nervousness were associated with the automation (194). Whereas 51 percent of the men in the old plant reported feeling "jumpy" at least occasionally, 74 percent in the new plant felt this way. Starting up or shutting down the automated equipment made 82 percent feel tense, compared with 52 percent for the conventional machinery. In some instances the responses were indicative of sufficient anxiety to suggest that performance may have been severely affected. Such extreme cases were found in both plants, but they were more frequent in the automated one. This occurred in spite of the fact that the new plant had been staffed with specially selected employees who had volunteered for the work. The mere presence of very complex electronic and mechanical systems, which offer a potential threat of shaking off their subservience to the human operator, can provoke sufficient anxiety to make some people ineffective. This is particularly likely where the worker's training has been insufficient to produce a feeling of confidence in his ability to maintain control over the machinery.

Danger and the Accident Prone

In the study summarized above dealing with reactions to automation, the men appeared to be responding emotionally to the danger they perceived in their environments. Such feelings can, of course, be provoked in a great many situations where there is a possibility of injury or where an accident if it does occur is almost certain to have serious consequences. Many examples might be cited—work on high buildings and other structures during construction, work in the presence of explosives or radioactive materials, certain types of mining activities, tests of new and untried equipment, military service in combat. Some people are apparently almost immune to anxiety in these situations, but other people who have been sensitized to them as a result of prior experiences can have extreme emotional reactions. Strategic situational and emotional factors can thus combine to impair performance to the point where the man is totally ineffective in the dangerous situation. Continued exposure may result in an emotional disorder and incapacitate him for effective performance of any kind.

But the impact of danger on performance is not always mediated by emotion. The danger can also be translated directly into an injury which is severe enough to require continued absence from work. An occasional accident need not, of course, mean that the man is ineffective, but where there are repeated instances or where severe injury results in extended treatment or a permanent handicap, the disruption of performance can be sizable. Either absenteeism is excessive, or the man becomes physically incapable of meeting quality and quantity standards.

There is reason to believe that injuries of this kind are most likely to occur during the first few months on a new job when the man has not yet learned how to protect himself against the dangers in his new environment (200). Furthermore, the higher accident rates are found quite frequently among people who also lose more time from work for other reasons (191). In part this would seem to indicate a resort, presumably unconscious, to accidents as a means of escaping intolerable emotions aroused in the work situation. Such a reaction is not unlike that which occurs in connection with the development of some physical symptoms of emotional origin. In other instances underlying physical or emotional disorders may necessitate frequent absenteeism, while also providing a major source of distraction and thus contributing to accidental injury. Or, as will be seen, it may be the irresponsibility present in many such people which contributes both to the injuries and to absenteeism for other reasons.

This finding of an association between accidents and time lost for other reasons has important implications when combined with the fact that industrial accidents are particularly likely to occur between the ages of seventeen and twenty-eight and to decline to a minimum in the late fifties and sixties (197). Such evidence suggests that injuries are not merely a function of the amount of danger inherent in the work environment and the level of developed skill. Although training deficiencies coupled with the fact that the younger people are more likely to be new on the job might account for part of the age rise, this cannot be the whole story. The increase in number of accidents is far too great. Also, skill rates are lowest in the very youngest age groups, but injury rates do not reach a peak until twenty-one or twenty-two. There appears, therefore, to be something about specific individuals which causes them to be more susceptible, at least during a certain period of their lives. Studies of the emotional patterns and motives of people who have recently had an excessive number of accidents tend to support this conclusion. Some employees apparently develop a type of accident proneness which is attributable to their individual characteristics, although, of course, some contribution to each injury is also made by the danger intrinsic to the situation.

In one case two groups, one with a high incidence of industrial injuries over a two-year period and the other completely injury-free, were compared by means of a projective measure of certain personality characteristics (185). The accident prone were found to have rather negative attitudes toward their superiors, their jobs, and toward work in general. In addition, they were relatively lacking in optimism, trust in others, and positive feelings toward the people around them.

Similar but more comprehensive results were obtained from another study in which projective tests were given to fifty-four people with very high accident rates (192). Again there was a lack of warm emotional relationships with others. Although most of the accident prone had a wide circle of acquaintances and were considered good conversationalists, they did not really get close to people in an emotional sense. They were frequently concerned about their health and physical condition, yet actual illnesses were rare. Also, many wanted very much to achieve a higher social status, although usually they had not been successful in doing this. There was an excessive resort to the use of denial as a defense against disturbing emotion. As a result, many made bad mistakes in perceiving aspects of their environments. People in positions of authority, especially their superiors at work, seemed to arouse their hatred consistently, often for no real reason. Planning for the future was poor and erratic. The accident prone appear to be living in the present and to be a rather impulsive group. The latter conclusion agrees with the findings of another study in which it was demonstrated that the operators in the metalworking department of a certain factory who had more numerous and more severe injuries also tended to act with a degree of muscular speed which exceeded their visual ability to size up a situation (186). Action was quicker than perception and thought.

These studies, and others which might have been mentioned (94, 199), present a consistent picture. In a general sense the accident prone appear to be emotionally immature and somewhat socially irresponsible. Yet it is clear that people meeting this description are not necessarily emotionally ill and that there are many such individuals who are not even accident prone. To this must be added the fact that the tendency to have repeated accidents is rarely a fixed characteristic of an individual. High rates are usually not maintained over more than a few years (197), and sometimes the periods are much shorter. Repeated accidents must in most cases be considered indicative of transient maladjustments, which are particularly likely to manifest themselves prior to the age of thirty.

The most likely conceptualization seems to be that under stress, people with the appropriate personality patterns experience relatively brief shifts in their motivational hierarchies which result in a series of accidents. Usually the original dominance relationships reestablish themselves within a few years or perhaps much sooner, although in a very small number of cases the person remains accident prone throughout much of his life. The motivating forces responsible for accidents would seem to be a wish to impress others through quick, risky decisions and actions (impulsiveness) as well as an intense hatred of people in authority, a hatred which leads to a generalized defiance of all rules and regulations, including those in the safety area. The result of these motives might be expected to be very frequent exposure to dangerous situations and inevitably some accidents.

On occasion the aggression toward superiors may generate strong feelings of guilt, coupled with a wish, conscious or unconscious, to escape this unpleasant emotional experience through behavior which actually represents a punishment. Here there may be a sufficiently strong *need* for injury so that the accidents are not merely chance happenings in a personally caused context of excessive risk, but specifically contrived events. Sometimes a desire to escape other distressing emotions aroused at work may also serve as a direct stimulus to injury.

Counterbalancing these forces is the normal fear elicited by danger, and the threat of injury with its concomitant negative motivation. Self-preservation is a strong motive, and in most cases it remains dominant. When it does not, the forces contributing to accident proneness break through and determine behavior. Repeated and sometimes severe injuries, occasionally even death, result. Unfortunately the factors responsible for producing this shift in the dominance relationships between motives have not yet been identified.

What does a knowledge of the relationships between dangerous situations and performance offer by way of guidance for the manager who wishes to minimize ineffectiveness among his subordinates? It should be made clear at the outset that the preventive techniques currently available have unquestionably been of great value. Accident rates in the larger companies have dropped sharply during the past twenty-five years, to the point where the major factor contributing to lost time now is not injury on the job, but injury at home. Progress in smaller industry has been less spectacular, but it has occurred (197).

These changes have been achieved through a variety of procedures. Among them are poster campaigns, safety discussions and committees, formal competitions for low injury rates between groups, studies of jobs and analyses of accident reports to locate trouble spots, safety policies and regulations, special training in accident prevention for new employees, placement of those with physical defects and handicaps in safe occupations, and the design of equipment to maximize safety of operation. All these procedures can help in dealing with problems of ineffectiveness caused by the danger inherent in the work situation.

Unfortunately, many of these techniques achieve their results by making employees constantly aware of safety problems and of the presence of danger. This has without question been a major factor in reducing industrial accidents, but it may also be presumed to have raised the anxiety levels of many who are particularly sensitive to dangerous situations. Thus, a number of the methods currently used to reduce injuries act at the same time to contribute to performance failures in people who are so distracted by anxiety that their work is affected.

Since design of the workplace, and of any equipment used in it, is one major procedure which does not rely on the consciousness of danger to achieve its results, this particular approach to prevention would seem to be especially desirable. Actually, safety devices and other engineering solutions are not only of value in reducing injuries. They also give many people a feeling of confidence and security. As a result a sizable diminution of anxiety may occur among those who must work under potentially dangerous conditions. The rifle in combat, for instance, is not only an offensive weapon and a means to carrying out job duties, but also a source of security which provides a feeling of confidence and a belief that self-preservation is possible.

Although an extended treatment of equipment design in relation to safety is not warranted here, brief mention should be made of several important points (188). Readers who would like more detailed information should consult a book such as *Industrial Accident Prevention* (190), which deals specifically with techniques in the safety engineering area. Perhaps the most important thing to emphasize is that the design should, insofar as possible, introduce barriers which make it difficult for the individual to get into trouble. Safety devices and protective clothing should be developed which will prevent a person from placing himself in a dangerous situation. Controls should be designed and placed to minimize the chances of error. Devices which will provide reliable information regarding malfunctioning and the presence of danger should be employed. In addition, every effort should be made to furnish methods of eliminating any trouble that does arise. Controls and releases should be readily available and should be designed to use to the maximum the individual capabilities of the employee.

Where an individual has had several accidents which are sufficient to constitute a real managerial problem, and where he appears to exhibit the motivational and emotional patterns characteristic of accident-prone people, there are several other possible courses. As previously noted, such people tend to correct their own problems eventually, but often not until they have suffered considerable disruption of performance, contributed to major equipment losses, left the company precipitously, or received considerable sums in disability payments. Therefore, managerial intervention does seem to be called for when accident proneness is suspected, if only to prevent matters from getting worse. Action should be taken to reduce the danger inherent in the work situation so that tendencies to show off and take risks, as well as more directly purposive behaviors, have a minimal opportunity to produce an actual accident. If the man is working in a really dangerous job, he should be transferred. Such people will find risky situations, if they possibly can, on their own; management should do nothing to help them in this quest.

Another point represents a greater challenge to supervision. It is known that hatred of people in authority, together with their rules and regulations, is closely connected with accident causation. When an accident-prone person is forced into frequent close contact with his superiors, he is most likely to injure himself. Considering this, it would appear advisable for a manger to let a subordinate who has recently had several accidents go his own way insofar as possible. Certainly close supervision and constant checking are not to be recommended. The manager should try to keep the employee's resentment at a minimum and to eliminate any sources of conflict with authority. Of course, there are limitations on the extent to which such kid-glove procedures can be followed, but if contact between boss and accident-prone subordinate can be kept to a minimum, both may reap sizable rewards.

Subjective Danger Situations

In Chapter 3 it was noted that various aspects of the individual and his environment coalesce to produce emotional symptoms. Among the factors mentioned were the number of situations which unite with the person's sensitivities to produce disturbing emotions, the frequency and duration of his exposure to these situations, the intensity of the emotion aroused, and his capacity to withstand unpleasant experiences. Although the sensitivities and emotions involved exist in the individual, it is some characteristic of the environment which sets off the symptom. Furthermore, in a great many cases the individual reacts as if the situation were truly dangerous. Frequently he experiences fear or utilizes defenses to escape the fear. In contrast to the actual danger situations discussed in the preceding section, however, the man's interpretation is derived almost entirely from subjective factors. There is little real chance of injury or death.

There are a number of situations and situational aspects which can provoke reactions of this kind: open streets, being alone, high buildings, narrow spaces, arguments and fights, animals such as cats or mice, knives and scissors, speaking before a group, seeing cripples or accidents, crowds, examinations and tests, toilets, boats, noisy places, airplanes, darkness, riding on buses or trains, receiving orders or criticism, physical examinations and shots, social affairs, talking to the boss, talking on the telephone, disorder and confusion, separation from loved ones, being in a position of authority, a new and unfamiliar environment. These are typical, but there are others. Each individual has his own relatively unique pattern of sensitivities.

The motivational and emotional processes involved in the reactions are complex. Somehow, as a consequence of previous learning, these subjective danger situations achieve the capacity to initiate strong impulses and feelings of either an aggressive or sexual nature. These reactions have become attached to the situation and are triggered by it. But they are also of a kind which the individual has learned to consider bad and certainly inappropriate to the situations in which they are aroused. In fact, from his point of view, and probably from the viewpoint of society as a whole, the impulses and desires are so reprehensible that to attribute them to oneself would be almost inconceivable. They are therefore repressed from consciousness and not even experienced as such. Sometimes, as when there are physical symptoms of emotional origin, the actual experience of unpleasant emotions such as shame, fear, or guilt is avoided. The situation provokes a headache or a period of vomiting, and that is all. Sometimes, however, fear does break through, and the man feels scared every time he faces a certain type of situation. The impulse is aroused, is repressed because it is considered bad, and is replaced by anxiety. Severe physical punishment for harboring such thoughts is felt to be deserved, and the expectation of punishment serves as a stimulus to fear. Thus in a sense it is the unconscious motive which is feared, not the situation, although environmental factors set off the process and are consciously experienced as causes.

Reactions in subjective danger situations are similar to those where real danger is present. There are essentially four possibilities. The man may experience intense fear, but because of more dominant motives he may remain in the situation and continue to expose himself to it whenever he has to. There are many public speakers who have continued to address large groups for years while remaining on the verge of panic. In the same way, it is not unusual for a salesman to experience anxiety every time he approaches a customer and yet to continue in this type of work throughout his life. Performance may well be seriously affected in such cases, but the man continues to face his emotion.

On the other hand, a person may attempt to escape that which he fears by resorting to defenses and symptoms of the kinds described in Chapters 3 and 5. He may experience physical symptoms which are basically emotional in nature, or may constantly behave in a way which is symptomatic of emotional disorder, or may resort to pathological perceptions and beliefs. All of these are likely to interfere with the effectiveness of his work, either by reducing his efficiency or by making it necessary for the manager to remove him from the situation.

A third alternative can occur only after the man has come to recognize the sources of his anxiety. Having learned from past experience that certain situations are emotionally disturbing, he may well attempt to avoid exposing himself to experiences of this kind. The result can be an outright refusal to work in some environments and under certain conditions. On the other hand, various excuses may be developed in an effort to provide a socially acceptable reason for the avoidance. Some of these can be very ingenious, others quite far-fetched. On occasion, people caught between their fears and the demands of supervision become very emotional. A young woman may break out crying when told to work in a small and stuffy room alone. A man may become belligerent when informed that he must take a physical examination.

Finally, and this is considerably rarer, the man may enter the situation only to be overcome with terror. In spite of the absence of real danger, he may bolt from the room much as a person might attempt to escape from a burning house. Sometimes there will be a few muttered excuses on the way out. At other times words will not come, and the departure remains completely unexplained.

It is important to reemphasize that these reactions to danger situations, whether actual or subjective, are not unusual or entirely in the realm of the abnormal. Many people have experiences of this kind at one time or another. They become relevant from a managerial viewpoint only when performance is seriously affected. On occasion, fears such as these do spread. The conditions under which anxiety is set off increase as the individual thinks of similarities between existing sources of distress and other situations which have in the past been relatively anxiety-free. This, however, is probably the exception. Most people remain sensitive to a group of situations which they have dreaded for years, which they generally try to avoid, and which provoke fear and emotional symptoms when exposure does occur. Yet the number of situations remains essentially the same. Or occasionally people even learn to enjoy circumstances which have previously been a source of distress.

The management and treatment of these problems was discussed at length in Chapter 3. One additional point should be made, however. It is crucial, whether the reaction involves an actual danger situation or is purely subjective, to identify the specific cause. What is it in the environment that provokes the fear reaction? Only with this knowledge can changes be made which will restore an adequate performance level. Once the strategic situation has been spotted, appropriate changes in work requirements can be instituted or, if this is impossible, a transfer to a job which is less likely to arouse negative emotions can be carried out. Procedures of this kind are unlikely to achieve the desired results when specific knowledge of situational causes is lacking.

11

SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN MANAGERIAL INEFFECTIVENESS

THROUGHOUT these discussions frequent reference has been made to ways in which people holding managerial positions may themselves become ineffective. Chapter 7 in particular contained an extended treatment of this problem. Since management is judged largely in terms of its impact on the work of others, the analysis presented there of the ways in which managerial actions may contribute to the performance failures of subordinates is particularly relevant. Yet actually, any strategic factor may be instrumental for managerial ineffectiveness. Intellectual, emotional, motivational, physical, family, work-group, company, societal, and situational determinants may operate at the higher levels of the organization just as they do among those in positions of a less responsible nature. This will be evident in the case histories of Chapter 12.

There is, however, one major source of difficulty in managerial work which has not yet been covered in adequate detail. Under certain circumstances managerial jobs can come to represent subjective danger situations for those who hold them. This can in turn result in major performance decrements or perhaps complete failure. Such reactions occur often enough so that they must be considered a primary cause of managerial ineffectiveness. The pages which follow will take up the causes and consequences of these situational reactions in considerable detail.

Although in one sense so much emphasis on a particular type of strategic factor might not seem warranted, there are several justifications. The processes involved are complex and not easily understood, and if they are to be covered at all, they must be given extended treatment. Moreover, the topic is an important one insofar as managerial ineffectiveness is concerned. Among first line supervisors, subjective danger responses of this kind are probably the major cause of failure. Above the level of the initial managerial job the incidence appears to be somewhat less, but it is still high. As a major contributor to reduced efficiency in the management of a company, fear reactions provoked by the managerial situation are likely to have considerable bearing on the attainment of organizational objectives.

The Managerial Job as a Subjective Danger Situation

There are several unique motivational and emotional requirements of managerial work which are intimately associated with the perception of danger (79). Let us take up these requirements briefly before considering how they may serve to arouse fear. Most obvious is the fact that the manager must accept and perhaps even enjoy holding a position which yields power over other people. He is required by the nature of his work to use sanctions, both positive and negative, to control certain aspects of his subordinates' behavior. The man who cannot bring himself to influence others in such a way as to make them act in accordance with his wishes will have difficulty in any kind of supervisory work. Probably more than a mere willingness in this respect is needed. An actual enjoyment of the manipulation of power may well be desirable, although this should ideally be coupled with a capacity to keep the pleasure from becoming too evident. In any event subordinates must be induced to perform in a manner conducive to the attainment of organizational objectives.

Closely related is the requirement that the man in charge of a group must accept, and perhaps enjoy holding, a unique and highly visible position. The managerial job requires a person to stand out from the group and assume independent responsibility for behavior which must at times differ markedly from that of others in the same environment. The job forces an incumbent to behave in ways that his men do not, and for this reason he cannot look to those around him for guides to his conduct. He must be capable of acting entirely on his own initiative. Furthermore, a manager is inevitably a highly visible person. Because he has a potentially important role in satisfying the motives of his subordinates, he is continually watched and discussed. Thus, the managerial job requires not only a willingness to differ, but also an ability to accept a position at the center of attention without becoming disturbed. In one sense managerial work makes demands similar to those made of an actor. A manager is almost constantly on stage. He is required to play a part and to do so without permitting stage fright to cause him to forget his lines. Probably, to attain the necessary motivation, it is desirable that he actually obtain pleasure from this kind of activity.

To these job demands must be added the mere necessity of getting the work out and keeping things moving. These routine functions vary in different positions, and many of them are not unique to management. They range from working up budget estimates and turning in employee rating forms to participation in committee activities and talking on the telephone. Administrative demands of this kind are constantly present and if given a chance, will accumulate to the point where the backlog becomes overwhelming. Thus, a manager must be willing to devote himself to routine matters, even if he does not particularly enjoy this type of work. Probably it is easier to complete the tasks on schedule if some degree of positive emotion is experienced during the process. Certainly a manager cannot afford to consistently avoid more than a few of the myriad duties which he is required to perform as a regular part of his job.

The nature of the relationship between a manager and his superiors is important in a number of respects. For one thing, effective supervision within an organizational context requires a capacity to represent the group up the line and to obtain support at higher levels. In order to accomplish this a manager must be on relatively good terms with his boss. Ideally, the relationship would be quite close. If a man really likes and admires his superior, it will be easier to work with him on mutual problems. Naturally, a generalized hatred of people in positions of authority will almost certainly impair a manager's capacity to obtain support and approval up the line. Perhaps even more important, the manager who himself detests those above him is very likely to assume that the same feelings exist among his subordinates, that they hate him as much as he hates his own superiors. Thus, relationships downward as well as upward will suffer. And the manager will fail to take the steps necessary to obtain the assistance of his men, since he will assume in advance that they are out to thwart him.

Managerial work also contains a strong competitive element, which has important implications for performance. Although striving of this kind might not be required if the job existed in an organizational vacuum, it becomes crucial within the framework of a specific company. Individual managers do compete for scarce rewards, including promotions. The man who is unwilling to engage in rivalry does not maintain the *status quo;* he gradually loses out to those who participate in the struggle. This means that a manager must accept, and more probably, seek out competitive situations. He must try to make his group the best around and be willing to accept the challenge whenever another manager, or even a subordinate, questions his authority and position. Any manager who is unwilling to fight and try to win in this manner may well have the experience of seeing his group disappear from the organization chart or become subordinated to some other activity. Especially at the top levels, a real love of competition would seem to be almost essential.

Much of what has been described has become closely identified with what our society considers the male role. In fact, managing a group of subordinates is in some ways similar to being the father of a large family, although the analogy should not be carried too far. A father is expected to take charge, to make important decisions, to discipline, and to take steps to protect his family in ways which are in many respects comparable to those required of management. Partly because of this parallel, the behavior required to fulfill job requirements has come to be viewed as inherently masculine. It is generally acknowledged that there are few better ways for an individual to prove his masculinity. Accordingly, a person who prefers not to assume this role, who becomes rather upset at the prospect of manifesting typically masculine behavior, might be expected to have difficulty as a manager. The job as currently conceived tends to require someone who enjoys performing in a manner consistent with our culturally defined prototype of masculinity.

Unfortunately, however, many of these job requirements are almost inextricably interwoven with behaviors and thoughts which are widely considered undesirable. Thus, the nature of managerial work can serve as a stimulus to emotional reactions and motives which are socially condemned. Some people will experience anxiety, shame, or guilt in response to one set of requirements, and some people to other requirements. The important point is that exercising personal power, standing out from the group, performing routine duties, having a generally favorable attitude toward one's superiors, competing with others, or assuming the masculine role can, under certain circumstances, be considered bad. As a result, a manager may unconsciously expect severe punishment for almost anything he does. The work environment becomes for him a subjective danger situation and thus a constant source of severely unpleasant emotional experience. How can this happen? Let us consider the negative interpretations that may be placed on the six requirements of managerial work.

The power requirement can, of course, easily be viewed in a negative sense. To derive satisfaction from manipulating others to achieve one's own ends is widely considered Machiavellian and undemocratic. Yet it is not unusual for a person to derive pleasure from being in a position of power—to look forward to making others behave in accordance with his wishes. Feelings such as this probably occur at one time or another in practically all of us. In the writer's experience they are particularly prevalent among managers of outstanding competence. Nevertheless, it is also clear that the manager who experiences a sense of omnipotence and superiority while carrying out his duties may come to condemn himself for these feelings. There is ample evidence that when this happens he is likely to attempt to avoid his feelings and desires by repressing them, relegating them to the level of the unconscious. An expectation of punishment and physical injury often remains, however. And intense fear may well result.

The uniqueness and high visibility of the managerial job carries with it additional risks. Being the center of attention can stimulate a wish to "show off" which might result in boasting and excessive egotism. Assuming a role which is in certain crucial respects different may imply a negative evaluation of others, an "all of you are wrong and I'm right" attitude, that is not only clearly aggressive, but also rather superior. The fact that a manager is often required to play a part, much as an actor does on stage, can carry with it a certain implication of "phoniness" and superficiality. Information obtained in the course of psychotherapy indicates that there is also something about the constant visibility of the manager which may tempt him to go beyond showing off to behavior of a more clearly sexual nature. Apparently some managers, on occasion, experience a desire to exhibit themselves while carrying out job duties. People who are prone to exhibitionistic wishes are particularly likely to have such desires in situations of the kind managers frequently face. All of these impulses and thoughts can be expected to remain unconscious, if they have become associated with a previously learned anticipation of punishment. At such times, however, the anxiety often continues to force its way into consciousness.

On the surface, routine administrative duties would appear to be relatively free of such implications. However, this need not be the case. Certain activities of this kind may arouse strong impulses which in turn contribute to subjective danger reactions. For instance, the process of constructing a budget estimate may provoke a temptation to resort to dishonesty. For some the document is merely a budget estimate; for others it becomes an invitation to cheat and lie. It can also reactivate a long-standing desire to put something over on the company, to prove that higher management is as stupid and gullible as any lower-level supervisor. To take another example, filling out an employee rating form is no more free of potential danger than constructing a budget estimate. A degree of vindictiveness may be aroused which the manager never suspected in himself. Quite unexpectedly he may experience an intense desire to make the man being evaluated suffer "the way I have." Should repression take over, none of these wishes will become conscious, but the fear may very well remain. While testing and interviewing ineffective managers the writer has seen many instances where reactions of this kind were clearly strategic. Similar processes apparently can be activated by almost any of the routine administrative requirements of managerial work.

The need for a relatively close relationship with one's superior introduces the possibility of a different type of problem. If positive feelings of this kind are openly displayed, they may elicit many comments of a far from complimentary nature. The man who talks too freely about his admiration and affection for his boss runs the risk of being considered somewhat peculiar. So, too, does the man who constantly praises his superior's ideas, laughs at all his jokes, and spends as much time as possible in his presence. The vernacular contains many vividly descriptive terms which are often applied to such behavior. All of these carry homosexual implications.

Although some managers may consider such behavior on their part as no more than a means to an end, evidence obtained in connection with psychotherapy reveals that others may view it as indicative of feelings which are not normal. Such people can come to the conclusion that their emotional attachments are unnaturally close and begin to worry about themselves. Since anything that even suggests homosexuality is almost universally condemned in our society, it is not surprising that the motives aroused often do not become conscious at all. Yet the actual experience can well be one which borders on panic. The prospect of being branded a homosexual can provoke real terror in certain people, and this terror can be felt even when they have no real idea what they fear. All that reaches consciousness is an overpowering anxiety which appears to have no obvious cause.

While competition and fighting to protect one's position and group are generally, although not universally, considered good, the emotions aroused in connection with this process can lead to behavior which is viewed very differently. Competing within the rules is one thing; cutthroat competition quite another. A man can want to win too much, become too aggressive, and come to hate his adversaries more than he should. He may be tempted to engage in practices which are considered bad and deserving of punishment. For some people even the thought of resorting to "dirty" tactics and going all out to win no matter what is very disturbing. They do not consider themselves to be capable of such behavior and will not permit such thoughts to become conscious. Yet the writer has seen cases where such a person has become extremely anxious while walking down a steep flight of stairs behind another manager who is viewed as a competitor. Making the impulse unconscious does not seem to eliminate it entirely; the fear remains.

Intensely aggressive wishes of this kind can contribute to particularly severe anxiety when a manager sees his boss as the adversary. Experience obtained during the conduct of psychotherapy indicates that the desire to take away a superior's job, to steal what he has, can be one of the major sources of emotional disturbance. Under such conditions competitive wishes are particularly likely to carry with them an assumption that extreme retaliatory measures will be applied. Fighting with another person on one's own level is one thing; fighting with a man who has all the power on his side is quite another. Subjective danger situations which are provoked by impulses of this kind can be extremely terrifying for individuals who are specifically sensitized to them.

Even the masculinity inherent in managerial work can be converted into a potential source of danger. The desire to prove and demonstrate one's maleness can be carried to what, in the employment situation, might well be considered an extreme. As a result some people appear to experience sexual excitement almost continually on the job. Since such a reaction is likely to be considered inappropriate, a potentiality for anxiety and repression is clearly present. It is not at all uncommon in our society for a man to react to sexual stimulation as if it were bad, and thus to establish the conditions which characteristically convert a situation into one of subjective danger.

In all these cases wishes and impulses, together with personal interpretations of wishes and impulses, lead to fear only when they have become associated with punishment and injury in the mind of the individual. It is then that they are converted into unconscious motives in an attempt to blot out the sources of distress. As a result, all that is usually experienced in a strange and unaccountable fear of being found out, caught, punished, or rejected by others; a fear which appears to be aroused only when managerial responsibilities must be carried out. Actually, the difficulty can be traced back in most cases to the learning of cultural values regarding such things as the improper exercise of power, acting superior, showing off, superficiality, exhibitionism, taking unfair advantage of others, cheating and lying, vindictiveness, homosexuality, unsportsmanlike behavior, attacking those who cannot defend themselves, disrespect toward those in authority, and inappropriate sexual behavior.

It is probably worth pointing out that impulses and desires of the kind described are in no sense unique to individuals who react with fear when given managerial responsibilities. Motives which are culturally condemned occur in all of us. In fact, they are amazingly widespread among people who do not permit this type of motivation to manifest itself in behavior. Many competent managers rather frequently experience feelings and reactions aroused by the nature of their work which are identical with those which other managers cannot permit to enter consciousness. The difference is that the more effective manager is able to tolerate his wishes and does not interpret them as so inherently bad that they must be repressed and denied. Thus the conditions for intense anxiety are not created.

Subjective Danger and Performance

If we now look at subjective fear reactions in terms of their performance consequences, several types of managerial ineffectiveness emerge. One possibility, which from the writer's experience would appear to be relatively common, is that a man may retain his position but experience so much anxiety that he cannot concentrate on his work. He becomes so bound up in his personal problems and his unpleasant emotional experiences that there is little time to deal effectively with managerial duties. Decisions are delayed and forgotten or made impulsively, and incorrectly, at the last minute. Sensitivity to the desires and requirements of subordinates is minimal. The type of extended logical study required for an adequate performance analysis becomes almost impossible. For long periods the manager is so immersed in his anxiety that he loses the capacity to react effectively to events in the world outside himself. "Stupid" mistakes thus become commonplace.

It may also be, of course, that the disturbing emotions aroused in the workplace are handled through the development of various emotional symptoms which contain a strong defensive element. In an effort to cope with certain motives and the fears they provoke, there is a resort not only to repression but also to other methods of protecting oneself against unpleasant emotion. The symptoms and performance effects which result have been described in Chapters 3 and 5. In this connection there has been much talk about the ulcer-producing characteristics of managerial work. To the extent that these conclusions have any basis in fact, this is a result of the kind of processes which have been discussed. It is not merely the external pressure of executive responsibility that produces emotional disorders and physical symptoms of emotional origin at the top levels of the business world, but also the inability to tolerate the personal motives aroused, without resort to protective measures which are themselves potentially debilitating.

Under somewhat different circumstances a man may be aware of the potentiality for anxiety inherent in a managerial position. He may not know why he is afraid when faced with the demands of managerial work, but he knows that he does feel fear. As a result he may actually refuse to accept a promotion into the ranks of management or into a job with greater managerial responsibility than he already has. Although refusals of this kind are not common in the business world, they do occur. Unfortunately, the monetary rewards offered often tend to outweigh other considerations. Thus, many men who are apparently well aware of the personal difficulties they will experience nevertheless accept promotions because of the financial gain anticipated.

Decisions of this kind do not always hold up under the test of time. A manager may well overestimate his capacity to withstand the stress of job demands. If this is the case, avoidance may occur later, after the duties have already been assumed. Experience obtained while attempting to solve problems of ineffectiveness indicates that an individual may bolt from the managerial situation while still retaining his title. The consequence can be a resort to avoidance in one or more of the areas represented by the requirements of managerial work. Situations which call for wielding power, standing out from the group, carrying out certain routine duties, competing with others, maintaining close contact with superiors, or behaving in accordance with the demands of masculinity can become a source of terror. Decisions may be avoided. There may be practically no effort made to maintain an adequate performance level among subordinates. In short, anything which is considered part of the managerial job may elicit an emotional reaction so intense that escape becomes the only objective. Under such conditions absenteeism may become excessive.

Chapter 7 discussed at some length a number of studies of managerial actions which may become strategic for the ineffectiveness of subordinates. Since the manager who contributes to the unsatisfactory performance of the people under him is inevitably unsatisfactory to some degree himself, this research is clearly relevant here. Is there anything about the subjective danger situation which might contribute to an understanding of these findings? The University of Michigan studies will serve as a general basis for discussion.

Certainly the manager who spends his time working alongside his men and who fails to devote himself to such activities as planning the work of subordinates, carrying out specialized technical tasks, observing group performance, and motivating his men may well be attempting to avoid crucial job demands. Merging with the group in this manner can represent, in many cases, a method of escaping from requirements connected with standing out, having considerable visibility, and being different—as well as an escape from the anxiety that compliance with these requirements might produce. In any specific instance, of course, some other type of subjective danger reaction may be involved. This behavior can even be caused by factors which have no relationship to anxiety at all. Anyone who has had experience in working with problems of human behavior will recognize that the same actions can be carried out by different people for quite different reasons.

Excessive supervision, to the point where subordinates feel that they are being constantly watched and instructed in the minutest details of their work, can also be a response to fear and guilt aroused in the managerial situation. If a manager tends to view the various motives and feelings which have been discussed as bad, and if he anticipates punishment as a result, he may well become extremely sensitive to criticism and blame. He expects to be condemned and punished for almost everything he does. In reality, of course, the source of his guilt is within himself. But since the motives involved have become unconscious, almost anything in the environment can be viewed as a potential source of harm. This anticipation of punishment may be extended to include others. The manager becomes convinced that his subordinates, like himself, are certain to do something wrong. They become, in a sense, an extension of his own being. Since he is responsible for their work, he will be blamed. The only way of escaping is to watch each man and instruct him in such detail that he cannot do wrong. If the man can be supervised closely enough, perhaps the expected errors can be stopped before they occur and thus punishment can be avoided. Reactions of this kind are certainly not uncommon in the business world. They are exacerbated when higher-level management is in fact as critical and punitive as the manager's emotional difficulties have led him to expect.

The third finding of the University of Michigan studies suggests a similar process. The less effective managers appear almost totally indifferent to their men, exhibiting little kindness and understanding in dealing with them. Contacts with subordinates are few and when they do occur tend to be highly formal, usually involving criticism for mistakes. Again, this is the kind of behavior which may result from fear and guilt. A manager can fail to take an interest in his men and look out for their needs because he is afraid that if he gets emotionally close to them, they will find out too much about him and condemn him. If members of his group were to really get to know him, he is sure that they would come to consider him just as reprehensible as he considers himself. He tries, therefore, to escape this expected condemnation by erecting a formal wall around himself and by appearing so strong and righteous that he could not possibly be suspected of evil deeds and thoughts. For such people, to be kind and understanding, and weak, is to be terribly vulnerable to attack. Thus any show of considerate behavior carries with it a potential for arousing intense anxiety. In some of these instances also, the manager's anticipation of hatred and condemnation by subordinates may be increased as a result of his strong negative feelings regarding people in authority. He may assume that since he himself has a defiant and rebellious attitude toward his own superiors, his men must hate him just as much and be constantly on the lookout for a way to get something "on" him.

Of course, negative feelings toward those at higher levels may also make it almost impossible for a manager to represent his group upward in the organization. This need not be entirely a result of bad relations between the man and his boss. If the man's aggressive impulses are repressed and only fear is experienced, any contact between the two will serve to arouse very unpleasant emotional reactions. This is particularly likely to occur when the manager has a strong desire to take over the higher-level position and is tempted to resort to competitive methods which are generally condemned. The fear and guilt aroused by even the thought of his superior may be so great as to lead to almost complete avoidance. The man does not exert influence up the line because he cannot bring himself to face those above him.

Avoidance reactions of this kind, which preclude obtaining support from a superior, may also occur when very strong positive feelings are present. If a man harbors an intense affection for his boss, the impulses associated with this positive emotion may serve to arouse shame and guilt. The only way of avoiding these unpleasant experiences may be to remain as far away from the source of the feelings as possible.

The fifth factor established by the University of Michigan investigations can without question be caused by reactions to a subjective danger situation. A man may easily fail to exercise influence over the group and to establish performance standards because he is afraid of his own reactions in the leadership situation. The problem may be in the area of exercising power, or standing out from others, or carrying out routine functions, or competing with other managers and groups. Whatever the particular difficulty, a manager may fail to exercise his authority and accept the role his position requires of him because of the anxiety and guilt which he anticipates if he should do so. In this sense he may be said to fear success. He fears his own impulses, impulses which are particularly likely to be elicited in the positions which represent success in the business world.

Although we have discussed only the results of the University of Michigan research, the other findings reported in Chapter 7 appear to be subject to the same type of interpretation. As previously pointed out many of these studies yield conclusions which are almost identical with those of the Michigan investigators. Managerial ineffectiveness, although it can have many causes, seems particularly likely to result from subjective danger reactions instigated by basic job requirements.

12

CASE HISTORIES AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSES

Although we have treated the various strategic factors as essentially separate entities up to this point, they do not actually occur in such splendid isolation. The psychoanalysts often say of human behavior that it is overdetermined, that many causes operate at the same time to produce a given result. Certainly this is true in the case of ineffective performance. Occasionally there is an instance where only one factor has contributed to failure, but this is very rare indeed. The number involved can well run as high as seven or eight. This multiplicity of causation will be abundantly evident in the case histories which follow. In fact, the major reason for presenting these examples of performance failure is to give the reader a feeling for the great variety of ways in which the diverse elements may interact. The cases make it clear that ineffectiveness is not a product of isolated causes, but the outcome of a complex pattern of interrelationships.

The preceding chapters have presented a large number of factors which may operate to push a man below acceptable standards of performance. For purposes of performance analysis these factors should be considered potential hypotheses available to the manager when he must establish the causes in a specific case. They provide a framework for looking at any given failure, a schema pointing up the various possibilities which must be investigated and then either eliminated from further consideration or established as strategic. The preceding chapters have also suggested a variety of potential solutions which may be applied if and when a specific determinant has been identified.

In view of the crucial importance of the matter of identification, it might be well to introduce a review of the various possible strategic factors at this point. The following list provides such a general schema for performance analysis:

- Intelligence and job knowledge
  - Insufficient verbal ability
  - Insufficient special ability other than verbal
  - Insufficient job knowledge
  - Defect of judgment or memory
- Emotions and emotional illness
  - Continuing disruptive emotion (anxiety, depression, anger, excitement, shame, guilt, jealousy)
  - Psychosis (with anxiety, depression, anger, etc., predominating)
  - Neurosis (with anxiety, depression, anger, etc., predominating)
- Individual motivation to work
  - Strong motives frustrated at work
  - Unintegrated means to satisfy motives
  - Excessively low personal work standards
  - Generalized low work motivation
- Physical characteristics and disorders
  - Physical illness or handicap, including brain damage
  - Physical disorders of emotional origin
  - Inappropriate physical characteristics
  - Insufficient muscular or sensory ability
- Family ties
  - Family crises
  - Separation from an emotionally significant family
  - Social isolation
  - Predominance of family considerations over work demands
- The groups at work
  - Negative consequences associated with group cohesion
  - Ineffective management
  - Inappropriate managerial standards or criteria
- The company
  - Insufficient organizational action
  - Placement error
  - Organizational overpermissiveness
  - Excessive span of control
  - Inappropriate organizational standards or criteria
  - Intracompany conflict
- Society and its values
  - Application of legal sanctions
  - Enforcement of cultural values by means not connected with the administration of the law
  - Conflict between job demands and cultural values as individually held (equity, freedom, morality, etc.)

- Situational forces
    - Negative consequences of economic forces
    - Negative consequences of geographic location
    - Detrimental conditions of work
    - Excessive danger
    - Subjective danger

In the case histories which constitute the major portion of this chapter, every effort has been made to include all information relevant to the identification of strategic factors. In addition, contrary to what has become common practice in presenting management cases, the solutions actually applied by the managers having responsibility for the man's performance have been noted. Each case history is followed by a detailed performance analysis, which includes a discussion of why certain factors should be considered strategic in the particular instance and others should not. In some instances the action taken by the manager in the case appears to have been correct; in others a certain amount of second-guessing seems called for. Possible alternative procedures for establishing a satisfactory level of performance are therefore discussed at some length.

Since the case histories are separate from the analyses, the reader who wishes to test his skill may easily do so. It might be interesting for him to note all suspected strategic factors on a separate piece of paper and then to compare these with the factors identified in the performance-analysis section which follows each case history. In addition, he may wish to compare his own solutions with those presented later. The approach to corrective action is based on an analysis of potentialities for change: Can a specific cause of failure be reversed or eliminated through some type of managerial action? This is the essence of the recommended procedure and it is the question posed with reference to each strategic factor.

The approach to performance failure outlined here may appear excessively detailed, almost pedantic, to some. Unquestionably it requires that many possibilities be consciously considered and that a manager keep a number of things in mind at one time. Yet this is an essential condition for almost all learning, especially when a new skill is being developed. When a person first learns to start a car, every action must be considered before it is executed. Later, the whole process runs off in perfect sequence without his being conscious of the specific acts involved. It becomes automatic. Similarly, many aspects of performance analysis which originally require extended conscious consideration begin to occur automatically with increasing experience. Since solving problems of performance failure is a much more complex task than driving a car, one can never expect to carry out the processes involved without thinking at all. But when a sensitivity to the signs associated with the more frequently encountered strategic factors has been developed, the time required in formulating and checking hypotheses can be drastically reduced. Unfortunately, a much more self-conscious approach is necessary in order to apply these procedures during the early stages of learning.

It is important to emphasize that performance analyses cannot be carried out merely by observing the behavior of the individual who is failing. Some conception of how he thinks and feels, of what he experiences, is almost always needed. This kind of information can sometimes be obtained from the man himself. A great deal can be learned by getting him to talk about and report on his thought processes, motives, and emotions. Additional information can be gathered by using various psychological tests which measure aspects of intelligence and personality, including values, interests, emotional patterns, etc.

Although these techniques are not generally available to a manager unless he asks for assistance in solving his problem, it should be emphasized that they rarely provide information which cannot be obtained from some other source. Tests are helpful because they yield a great deal of information quickly and because one can be relatively certain of the meaning and interpretation of the data they provide. There is nothing unique about this information, however. A perceptive and sensitive manager who is thoroughly informed about the functioning of human personality can reach similar conclusions by listening to and watching a person over an extended period of time. This process is much more time-consuming than psychological testing, but it can be equally accurate. Whether it is or not depends on the individual manager. Some people are very good at inferring the characteristics of a man's so-called inner life—his thoughts, feelings, and desires—from extended observation and conversation. They use a profound awareness of their own inner experiences to draw inferences regarding how others must feel. However, some are almost incapable of really understanding other people in this sense. Managers of this latter kind may be very effective in other respects but may find the conduct of an adequate performance analysis very difficult. It is not easy to empathize with other people sufficiently to comprehend their true thoughts and feelings.

Up to this point, we have been forced to rely on the managerial experiences of individual readers as evidence for the crucial significance of performance failure. Now it is possible actually to demonstrate just how much time and attention unsatisfactory employees do require. The twelve case histories which follow should provide rather convincing evidence in support of the contention that work which is consistently below standard represents one of the major problems facing business management today.

Case 1

ACCOUNTING MANAGER:

JOHN SCHÄDLER

John Schädler was hired directly into a temporary and specially created position as assistant director of accounting in the French subsidiary of a large American company. It was hoped that within a year and a half he would replace his boss, who was retiring, and take complete charge of the subsidiary's accounting activities. He had been selected as an accountant experienced in foreign assignments after an extensive search carried out by a firm specializing in executive recruiting.

Although the initial period of his employment was devoted almost entirely to learning the technical aspects of his job, he was expected to move gradually into the managerial sphere. Since he had no knowledge of the French language, this presented certain problems. The majority of the employees in the department were American, and the remainder were French nationals with a thorough knowledge of English. However, there was much contact work to be done outside the company, especially with government officials, and John would eventually be responsible for much of this. As a result, one of his first duties was to learn to speak French.

In addition, it was assumed that he would gradually take charge of things internally, initiating contacts with other executives of the company as required and making his own recommendations as to procedures. This involved some difficulties. John's superior had been in his present job for almost twenty years and was used to running things. In principle he wanted his new subordinate to take increasing responsibility, but he was not one to gradually fade away. It was evident that John would have to push a little to get the experience he needed prior to his superior's retirement. All this had been made quite clear to him at the time he was hired. The vice-president in charge of accounting and finance for the parent company had discussed this problem at some length, indicating that although John would not find his new boss actively resistant, he would not find the elderly man of much help in smoothing the way for him either.

After six months a thorough review of John's work was carried out, and the results were very encouraging. He had proved unusually adept in learning the company's accounting procedures and familiarizing himself with the figures contained in reports the accounting department had made during the past few years. In fact, his capacity for citing relevant facts and figures was considered rather unusual. Six months later, a similar review was carried out with the aim of reaching a final decision on John's promotion to succeed his retiring superior. It came as somewhat of a shock to everyone concerned that, when all available information was put together, it was obvious that the original timetable could not be followed. It would be at least another year before promotion could be seriously considered and there was a real possibility that it might never occur.

There had been little progress since the last evaluation. John had begun to take an active role in the day-to-day accounting activities of the company, but not in a managerial capacity. He did what he was told, but he himself initiated practically nothing. When pushed to take over and actively direct others, he seemed to lack confidence. Generally he found some way to avoid such situations. It was as if another accountant, although a rather high-priced one, had been added to the staff. As a result there was a general lightening of work loads, but John was getting no real training in managerial responsibilities. This was not primarily attributable to the department head's failure to provide opportunity. In fact, the older man had been unexpectedly helpful, especially during the last three or four months. He had taken several business trips which were far from essential just to provide a chance for his successor to gain experience in running the department. On such occasions he would return to find that all important decisions had been made by several of the senior men in the department.

There were other problems. John rarely wrote a memo, but when he did it was likely to be difficult to understand. He would dash it off quickly, leaving his secretary the difficult job of integrating the words and sentences into a meaningful product. She usually found herself unequal to the task. Nevertheless, he would characteristically sign whatever she presented to him without even reading it. The only exceptions were times when the report contained numerical data. Then the slightest error in transcribing numbers was likely to be noted.

Furthermore, he had done nothing to develop contacts either inside the company or in the city. In fact, there were very few people in the other departments who really knew him at all. He never spoke to anyone unless approached first and even then his answers were likely to be extremely laconic. Within his own department he was generally well liked, but there were often whole days during which he said no more than ten words. The Schädlers' social life was restricted to a small group of Americans with a similar Germanic background. These were invariably people that Mrs. Schädler had met first. John rarely initiated social contacts or even conversations, either in the office or outside. He never invited anyone to his home.

Perhaps the greatest failure, however, had been in his attempts to learn the French language. For three or four months he did nothing in this area. Then, after prodding, he signed up for some company-sponsored classes. His progress was slow and his attendance sporadic. When asked about this in connection with the annual evaluation, his teacher was discouraging. Her pupil had tried hard at first, but with limited success. Then about a month ago he had apparently given up entirely and had not attended class since. She frankly doubted that he would ever learn to speak French. "Actually," she said, "I'm not entirely sure he ever learned to speak English. He rarely uses the language."

The evaluation report also contained additional information. John had obtained a college degree in accounting just before entering military service during World War II. Most of his service career had been spent in England, and it was there that he had met and married his wife. Having taken a discharge without returning to the United States, he had worked for first a British firm and then an American one in a variety of accounting specialties. Most recently, just before getting the job in France, he had concentrated on tax work. The new job had involved a very considerable increase in salary and he had accepted it immediately when offered.

During the next two months the situation remained unchanged in spite of the fact that John had been fully informed of the results of his annual review. Finally a decision to discharge him was reached. This had not been the original intent when it was first agreed that he would not succeed to the department-head position. Unfortunately, however, the whole story had become common knowledge in every accounting group in the company, and John had been labeled a failure. As a result, efforts to place him in a strictly accounting, rather than managerial, job met with considerable resistance from the individual supervisors—resistance which in this particular company was traditionally respected. Retaining him in France was out of the question, since a reduction in force was already underway there.

At the time of his discharge, John mentioned several factors that might serve to explain his behavior. He had been raised in a German-speaking home and had not been introduced to English until he entered school. In spite of this, he could now remember only a few words of German. As a child he had been brought up strictly. In the presence of his parents he was forbidden to utter a word except when spoken to. Whenever he broke this stricture, a spanking inevitably followed. John's father had been a carpenter and, although he was able to support his family, there were times during the winter months when things were difficult. Little extra money was available for toys, books, and the like. In school, as might be expected, his marks were uneven. In arithmetic, mathematics, and accounting he had been an A student, but literature courses had been a different story. In fact, during his last term in college he had to make up a required course in Shakespeare that he had previously failed. The early work in grammar which required memorization had not been so difficult, but anything involving actual reading or writing seemed impossible. As a result an abiding dislike of reading and books had remained with him all his life.

Test scores obtained shortly before the time of discharge (testing was not a part of the initial screening procedure) indicated a verbal ability approximately at the population average, in spite of a very superior level of numerical ability.

Performance Analysis

John Schädler clearly went beyond his intellectual depth, at least insofar as verbal ability is concerned, when he took the job in France. His test scores, which were unfortunately obtained belatedly, indicated a verbal ability which is barely at the minimum for managerial and professional occupations. When combined with a very high level of numerical ability, this was sufficient for accounting work, but not to meet the considerably greater demands of an important management job. The position, as most do at this level, required more skill in verbal communication, both oral and written. John had particular difficulty in speaking to other people, being unusually laconic and reticent. He also did a poor job when it came to writing memos. The problems in this area were further compounded by the requirement that he learn French. This was like putting salt on a wound.

Actually, with John's early experiences and frustrations in the language area, it is surprising that he finished college. Without his numerical ability and an appropriate major such as accounting, he probably never would have. His early training was such as to discourage any interest in things verbal. Parental strictures on talking, as well as the unpleasantness of having to learn a new language with which his peers were thoroughly familiar on entering school, must have had negative effects on his motivation to learn in the verbal area. What indications we have suggest, in addition, that the actual opportunities for verbal learning were small. Only native potential appears to have been at a high level, but this was channeled largely into the numerical sphere. Thus, in school and college, mathematical and accounting courses were easy for him. But in the verbal area, where deficiencies in motivation and environmental opportunity had long been in evidence, performance had always been marginal. In fact, John flunked the course in Shakespeare in spite of an A average in his major subject.

Other strategic factors of an intellectual nature appear to have been lacking. As has already been noted, special abilities other than the verbal presented no problem. In fact, numerical ability was surprisingly high. Also, there was no difficulty associated with knowledge of the job. John knew his work well. He got into trouble only when faced with demands related to communication. Most dramatic was his lack of capacity for learning a new language even when given every opportunity to do so and when, during the initial period, he devoted considerable effort to the task.

There is no evidence of emotional illness or of disruptive emotion. John may have been somewhat emotionally upset at work, but there is nothing to indicate that this was a strategic factor in his performance failure. Avoidance reactions are in evidence, especially where there are demands of a verbal nature, but this behavior is not of a kind usually considered symptomatic. Presumably anxiety lies behind the avoidance, but the manifest factor is motivational rather than emotional. The anxiety did not break through to the point where it disrupted performance. Instead, it set off behavior designed to protect John from experiencing unpleasant feelings and from the prospect of facing his own inadequacies in the verbal sphere.

Insofar as his job continued to require accounting skills and knowledge, John was a hard worker. But this was not true of the newer managerial aspects. There was practically no expectation of enjoyment where the verbal areas were concerned. Money was probably the major factor which influenced him to take the position, yet money was not sufficient to keep him from avoiding the job requirements which were most likely to make him acutely aware of his verbal deficiencies. In this respect he clearly lacked confidence and responded in a manner calculated to minimize the experience of failure. Apparently he had come to recognize his relative lack in the verbal area and had developed methods of avoiding complex demands of this kind.

On the job this meant that he tended to employ various types of unintegrated behavior in an effort to escape from his fear of failure. John initiated practically no managerial and supervisory activities even when, rather unexpectedly, his retiring superior gave him every opportunity to do so. Rather than take charge in the boss's absence, he preferred to let others carry out his managerial duties while he concentrated on the accounting matters with which he felt most secure. Memos were rarely written, but even more important, the avoidance continued when they were, so that the job was done in a perfunctory matter. In the area of spoken communication John was equally deficient. He warded off any sense of inadequacy by speaking little and by neglecting the job demands which had to do with developing contacts inside and outside the company. In this way he eliminated any possibility of failure, since he did not even try. The same thing happened with the French lessons. As soon as it became clear that the old difficulty with words would make this a very unpleasant experience, he quit. Thus he found a technique having no relationship to the attainment of job requirements which nevertheless made it possible to avoid a feeling of failure.

Since there were many work activities to which John responded with considerably greater enthusiasm than to those of a managerial nature, and since he had a long record of entirely satisfactory performance as an accountant, the lack of work motivation cannot be considered general. The problem is specifically related to verbal demands. He had been taught in childhood to avoid oral communication. This, coupled with a not-too-surprising restriction of verbal development, appears to account for the very limited motivation for managerial work.

Physical factors are not in evidence. The job did not actually make major demands in this area, except with regard to health. In this respect John appears to have had no particular problem. Similarly, family ties do not seem to be strategic. If anything, Mrs. Schädler was a positive force in the situation, since it was she who made whatever social contacts the family did have. Obviously, separation from the parental family could not have been a cause of failure, since John had lived and performed effectively in Europe for many years. Of course, in one sense parental influences on motivation and intellectual development did contribute to ineffectiveness, but this kind of historical causation cannot be considered strategic. Certainly there is nothing that can be done now to erase these early family events and conditions.

At the group level there was a rather surprising lack of detrimental influence. It had been anticipated that the retiring manager might resist the idea of being replaced and make life difficult for John. This did not happen. Furthermore, although some informal leadership did apparently arise within the office, this was in response to a need created by the abdication of formal leadership. Nobody was trying to take anything away from John or to make things harder for him. In fact, the people around him apparently made every effort to help. He failed in spite of these efforts, not because of them.

In many respects the company did a competent job in introducing John to his new position. Potential difficulties were pointed out to him, extensive preparation and training were provided, his work was evaluated at periodic intervals in a comprehensive manner, and adequate standards were established. Yet the company did inadvertently contribute in a major way to the failure. In retrospect it is clear that John should not have been hired for a managerial job at such a level. This is a typical instance of overplacement on both intellectual and motivational bases. If tests had been employed at the time of hiring, the potential for failure in the verbal area would almost certainly have been unearthed. It looks very much as if the recommendations of the executive recruiting firm were accepted without sufficiently thorough investigation by the company. Whether the first supervisory job is assumed at a relatively high level, as in this case, or at the level of a foreman on a production line, the potentiality for failure is still high. The demands of managerial work are sufficiently distinctive to make success in some other capacity a poor predictor of effectiveness.

Although there is nothing that would suggest the presence of cultural factors, it might appear at first glance that situational forces were crucial. John was strongly motivated by a fear of failure which led him to avoid anything that might make him feel inadequate. He failed because whenever there was some prospect that verbal demands might be at a high level, he did not behave in accordance with the criteria and standards established for his job. This is not really a situationally specific reaction. It is more closely allied to the requirements of the position as determined by the company. It was not, for instance, a foreign country and the presence of a great many people speaking an unknown language that contributed to John's eventual dismissal, but the fact that he was required to learn this language in order to fulfill job demands.

There are, then, three major strategic factors—one intellectual, one motivational, and one organizational. Although the first of these, the relative verbal deficiency, might conceivably have been corrected through extensive training and education, there was neither sufficient time, nor were adequate facilities available. In view of the long history of difficulty in this area and the genesis in early family training, it is doubtful that anything could have been done in any event. Demotion into a less verbally demanding job seems to be most appropriate. This should also have served to eliminate the motivational problems. In the managerial job, John avoided that which he quite realistically expected to find difficult. In a position which does not make verbal demands of this kind, there is no reason to believe that these avoidance reactions would become strategic. Thus, the motivational problem could be solved by eliminating the need for behavior which John found almost impossible to initiate.

The only other possible solution would have been to attempt to induce a more job-integrated response to his fear of failure. From the available evidence this would seem very difficult. And the verbal deficiency would still have remained. Solving the motivational problem within the confines of the present job, even if it had been possible, would still in all probability have left the company with an ineffective manager. It would seem, then, that correcting the overplacement through demotion to a lower-level nonmanagerial job would have provided the most appropriate solution. Presumably, in view of the man's previous training, experience, and performance, the new job should have been in the accounting area.

This is not what the company did. John was permitted, and in fact asked, to leave, because no other manager could be induced to take him in a strictly accounting capacity. Yet there is every reason to believe he would have done a first-class job, once he was freed of managerial demands. Certainly everything we know about him suggests outstanding competence in the accounting area. Although there is a possibility that he might not have accepted the demotion, it has been the writer's experience that many people are rather relieved to escape disturbing situations of this kind. More often than not, the demotion is accepted with a degree of acquiescence which comes as a surprise to almost everyone involved.

We cannot, of course, reach a judgment as to whether some group should have been forced to take John Schädler in an accounting capacity, or whether a really effective selling job could have convinced some manager of his potential value. It may have been that in this particular company, efforts to force a manager to take a subordinate against his wishes would have provoked so much conflict that the loss would have been greater than the gain. Nevertheless, the company did waste a man whom it probably should have tried hard to keep. There must have been at least a few accountants on the payroll of a company of this size with less to offer than John and with even less potential for promotion to managerial ranks. Probably the best approach under the circumstances would have been to make a trial appointment in an accounting job for six months or a year, on the assumption that John could prove himself by then.

A personnel department which has built up a record of correct recommendations in the past can usually obtain acceptance for this kind of trial placement without too much difficulty, even when it lacks the authority to make such decisions on its own. Often consistent rejection of a man such as John suggests that similar personnel recommendations have proved incorrect rather frequently in the past.

Case 2

PRODUCTION FOREMAN:

JOSEPH JOHNSON

Joseph Johnson started work at the plant right after leaving school. The town was small and did not offer much opportunity for employment to a young man seventeen years of age seeking his first job. Furthermore, the depression years were no time to do anything but grasp whatever kind of work came along and hold on tight. What came along for Joe was a chance to join one of the loading crews at the factory. He quit school before graduation in order to be sure the opportunity did not slip through his fingers. His father, who had worked in the maintenance department at the plant practically since it started up, felt it would be best to take the job. Also, several of Joe's friends who were already employed on the same crew urged him to join them.

Although the loading-crew jobs were usually considered starting positions from which people moved over into production as openings occurred, this particular crew remained almost intact for a number of years. Characteristically, when a promotion was offered to a young man in the crew, he would turn it down, indicating that he preferred to stay with his present group. Joe was no exception. He declined three offers of better-paying jobs before finally moving to a production unit, and then he changed only because his crew was broken up. Unfortunately, he had no more than started his new work when orders arrived for him to report for military service. As an unskilled laborer not yet fully trained in his new position, he had little basis for requesting deferment.

Four years passed before Joe returned to his hometown to stay. He turned up at the plant personnel office several days later. A few questions brought out the facts that he wanted to return to his old job, that he had married a local girl while home on leave, and that he was darn glad to be back. Military service had been all right, but he preferred the friends he had grown up with to the hodgepodge of people from everywhere that he had been exposed to in the Army. His service record was satisfactory, although he had never risen above the rank of corporal. There was little question about his being given a job. Legal requirements regarding the reemployment of returning veterans were of course important, but in addition the prewar employment record carried the notation, "A willing employee, completing all work promptly with a minimum of error; has done a commendable job." Everyone was glad to have him back.

The years that followed were relatively uneventful. Several of the boys from the old loading crew went away to college on the GI bill. Some took higher-paying jobs in the city, although many of these eventually drifted back to the plant. Joe held on tight to what he had and stayed with the people who understood him. He was well thought of and well liked, and it was obvious that he enjoyed his friends at work and his family. There were occasional opportunities to work elsewhere—outside the plant and with other groups within. None were sufficiently attractive.

As time went by Joe accumulated more and more seniority. With the war years added in, he began to develop a real stake in his job. He talked about this a lot—the fact that he was an old-timer, that he remembered how things used to be before the war, and that he had stayed with the gang through thick and thin. Gradually, increasing opportunities to take responsibility occurred. The foreman was often away because of conferences, illness, or vacations. It was traditional that the senior man take over in his absence. Joe was that man. He was never formally selected and in fact, the superintendent was not even consulted. It had always been done that way.

However, when the foreman rather suddenly took a disability retirement, a more formal decision had to be made with regard to a replacement. Several candidates were considered, but Joe Johnson obviously had the inside track. It would be hard to turn him down. He knew the work, had had supervisory experience as an alternate to the foreman, and perhaps most important, was a popular man throughout the plant. The combination of seniority, experience, and popularity was hard to argue against. If Joe was not selected, a number of people, especially the old-timers, might be rather unhappy. There was little point in running the risk of stirring them up. After all, Joe probably was the best man for the job. The appointment went through without a hitch.

The work continued much as before. The new foreman seemed to be doing all right; at least, there was no trouble from his group. Grievances and disciplinary actions were in fact at an all-time low. The unit was overstaffed according to company standards for the type of work done, but so were a number of other groups in the plant. Also, breakdowns seemed to be rather frequent. But that could not be considered Joe's fault. The equipment was old and the maintenance department overworked. Nobody could break any production records with that kind of situation. Yet it was because of the maintenance problem that the trouble started.

Late one afternoon a maintenance foreman who had a reputation as a good "management man" and also as one of Joe Johnson's least ardent admirers, reported a strange situation to his boss. He and his crew had been working on the equipment again and had finished up in Joe's area about midafternoon. But the operators were nowhere in sight. A check of the time cards indicated that the three men were in the plant, although nobody seemed to know where at the moment. Joe said he would take care of it and tell the men what the maintenance crew had done when they were located. When the maintenance foreman went through the area an hour later to get some parts, the three men were still not there, although they were still punched in.

An informal check was made just before five o'clock, and the three men were clearly not in evidence. Yet their time cards were punched out as of quitting time. Joe was on the carpet five minutes after he arrived at the plant in the morning. He had very little to say. The men must have been around the plant somewhere. Things had been pretty hectic the preceding afternoon and he had not had time to look for them. No, they had not checked with him before leaving the area, but he had had to be off the floor several times early in the afternoon. No, he had not seen them check out at five.

One of the three workers, however, was less reticent. When the breakdown occurred and the maintenance men were called, they had washed up, gone out the gate, and stopped at a bar down the street for a beer. They just had not made it back by quitting time. With this start, the rest of the story could be pieced together rather easily. Apparently the foreman had not seen his three men leave, but when their absence became evident he had done nothing to find them. Presumably he knew from past experience where they were. He had asked the others to work a little harder so that the absences would not show up in the production figures. This had been done. At first it was not completely clear who had punched the men out at quitting time. However, by a process of elimination the field was narrowed down to two men, one of whom was Joe. A second period of questioning brought a confession. Yes, he had been the one.

Further investigation unearthed a number of similar instances. One man who had frequently arrived at work under the influence of alcohol on Monday mornings only to be sent home had never lost any pay because of these episodes, a fact which he himself found it hard to understand. Apparently his time card had always been turned in to indicate a full day's work. Another man whose absenteeism was so excessive as to make continued employment questionable suddenly started working very steadily—for the record. Questioning indicated little change in his actual behavior. The company was obviously paying for a good deal of work that was not performed. A decision was tentatively reached to discharge Joseph Johnson for inability to fulfill the requirements of his job.

When this conclusion was told to Joe he launched into a long and impassioned plea for "just one more chance." He was in debt, his youngest child was sick, and his father, who had retired from the company just over a year before, had been ill for several months. The effect of his discharge on the father's condition might be drastic. There was more. He had not intended to do anything wrong, only to protect the gang so they would not get in trouble. The boys were likely to be rather unhappy if he tried to take action in cases like this. It seemed best not to stir them up. In the end it was easier to punch the time cards for them and forget the whole thing. There was less trouble that way, and anyhow, it was a good thing for a foreman to remain popular with his men. By the time he finished, Joe had created the impression that he had not only exhibited admirable loyalty to his group, but had also done the company a good turn by keeping the workers happy and morale at a high level. Even the superintendent felt a little sorry for him. It was unfair to punish a man too severely in a case like this. After all, he had had less trouble in his group than most of the other foremen.

In the end Joe was demoted and put back in the job which he had started over twenty-five years before—with the loading crew. He was not fired, and he did not quit.

Performance Analysis

Intellectually, Joseph Johnson appears to be quite adequate to the demands of his work. He knew the job well, including the rules which were supposed to govern his behavior. There is no reason to believe that he was outwitted by his subordinates. His job as a foreman would presumably be placed in group 2, and thus it required no more than average intelligence, perhaps less. Joe's verbal ability was at least that high. A similar conclusion seems true for the emotional area. There is no evidence of emotional problems. In fact, throughout the incident which led to his demotion, the foreman behaved in a very cool and collected manner. There is nothing to indicate a particularly high level of anxiety. It may have been that he acted as he did out of fear that his subordinates would retaliate if he should actually accept his managerial responsibilities, but it is the motivation, rather than the emotion, which actually appears as detrimental to performance.

In one sense of the term, Joe's work motivation was, of course, quite adequate. On the loading crew he was described as a "willing worker," and there is no reason to believe that this label was any less appropriate when he became a foreman. Yet he did seek to satisfy his desire for group acceptance and popularity in a way which was clearly detrimental to performance in his managerial role. Rather than identify with the managerial group and attempt to satisfy his motives in this context, he maintained his very close relationship with the workers and continued to seek the pleasure he anticipated in their approval. This kind of motivation with its concomitant extreme loyalty to the group had, in fact, been in evidence ever since Joe started with the company.

He gave up his education and failed to complete high school as a result of the urging of his father and his friends. Everyone else seemed to feel that he should accept the job at the plant, and so he did. Later he turned down three opportunities for promotion and higher pay in order to remain with his buddies on the loading crew. After the war the pattern remained the same. Perhaps it was actually reinforced by his marriage to a local girl and his experiences while in military service. He gave up many chances for better jobs and for education under the GI bill to live in his hometown and remain among his friends. Even opportunities for advancement within the plant were unacceptable to him if they necessitated a move away from his group to new and less familiar associations.

As time went on, the significance of group, plant, and hometown ties became even more apparent. Joe talked frequently about his seniority and his long-term membership in the group at work. He was clearly proud of his loyalty and his widespread popularity. The almost complete lack of trouble in his group, coupled with the minimal number of grievances and disciplinary actions, suggests that he had, in fact, consistently been able to maintain a high level of acceptance among his subordinates. But this state of affairs was apparently achieved at some cost to the quantity of work produced.

Behavior aimed at protecting subordinates to the detriment of their performance is consistent with this motivational pattern. For a long time Joe had apparently been gaining the group acceptance and popularity he desired by abdicating from the role required by his managerial position. In this way he contributed directly to the reduced effectiveness of his subordinates. The behavior which led to demotion was not a result of "laziness." The foreman did not merely fail to check on the actions of his men; he took specific steps to protect his absent workers and asked the others to work harder in order to cover up for them. Furthermore, he had been doing this sort of thing for some time, to the point where one apparent alcoholic was dumbfounded by the extent to which he had been shielded from discipline and loss of pay. In this instance Joe had apparently gone well beyond what the group expected of him. As he himself pointed out, however, he was merely trying to keep the men happy, to avoid trouble, and to retain his popularity. All this he accomplished, but by using methods which were totally lacking in integration with job demands.

There is no reason to suspect that physical factors were operative. The behavior that led to failure is not amenable to explanation in such terms, and in any event we have no indication that the man suffered from any physical illness. The role of the family requires a somewhat more extended discussion. Joe was married and had several children. His youngest child had been sick and so had his father. In addition, there were apparently some financial problems. Yet none of these factors appear to be really strategic. They became known when Joe expected to lose his job and was attempting to marshal every argument he could which might result in his retention. Even then, however, he did not base his entire appeal for clemency on these family considerations. In fact, there is no particular reason to believe that the events at home had precipitated any severe emotional reaction in Joe. Presumably he did have family problems, but it would be very difficult to account for his behavior on this basis. The ties with his subordinates appear to have been much more closely related to his performance failure than any ties he may have had with people outside the company. If anything, concern for his family should have led him to be more careful about fulfilling the demands of his job, rather than less so.

The work group, consisting of the foreman and those under his supervision, does appear to have been influential. Joe was strongly motivated to gain group acceptance and approval. This motivation, in interaction with the cohesive pressures of his group, contributed in no small way to his subsequent trouble. There is considerable evidence indicating that cohesiveness was high. When an emergency arose because of the absence of the three men, everyone worked together to make up the lost production.

After his behavior had been discovered, the foreman expressed very clearly the attitudes and norms regarding matters of mutual protection which prevailed in the group. He had intended "only to protect the gang so they would not get in trouble." That he felt under some pressure to do this is reflected in his statement that "the boys were likely to be rather unhappy" otherwise. It was "a good thing for a foreman to remain popular with his men." Presumably Joe felt that a failure to protect other members of the group would have jeopardized the popularity which was so important to him.

Actually, all the instances of performance failure that we know of can be accounted for in terms of these anticipated group pressures. The foreman consistently subordinated the requirements of his managerial position to group attitudes regarding protection of members. In doing so he became ineffective himself. He punched time cards for the men who were absent at the bar and took other steps to protect them. He covered up for another man who often arrived at work inebriated. He kept a man who had a record of excessive absenteeism from being fired by making it appear that his absences had ceased. All these would appear to represent negative consequences associated with a high level of group cohesiveness—consequences which resulted not only in a failure to establish adequate standards, but also in payments for work not done. The only factor suggesting that group cohesion was not at an absolute maximum was the surprising rapidity with which the true story came out. At least one man in the group apparently did not feel as strongly about the matter of loyalty as Joe did.

At the company level, there is one obvious strategic factor. A close examination of Joe's prior behavior would have revealed a strong attachment to the worker group and an obvious reluctance to assume managerial responsibilities where any conflict with group loyalties might be involved. There was, in fact, no real evaluation of the man's potentialities for higher-level work at the time of promotion. He took over initially because of his seniority, and then, having accumulated some experience, became an obvious choice for a permanent appointment. Yet in the Army he had never attained a rank above that of corporal, although he donned a uniform very early in the war. Obviously he had not been viewed as possessing much leadership potential by his military superiors. He had shown himself to be industrious and popular, but also rather dependent on others and totally lacking in ability to go against the wishes of the group. His promotion was based to a much greater extent on matters such as seniority and a wish to avoid antagonizing other old-timers than on an anticipation that he would be an outstanding manager. It is not surprising that the placement decision proved erroneous.

There is also some suggestion of organizational overpermissiveness. This is particularly apparent in the decision to promote Joe into the job of foreman. The action was taken primarily because it was the easiest way out. It would cause the least trouble. Something of the same attitude at higher levels is apparent at the end. The superintendent clearly felt sorry for Joe and placed emphasis on the lack of trouble within his group. There is throughout a strong implication that the atmosphere in the plant, insofar as it reflected top-level policies and decisions, tended to place excessive value on the minimization of conflict. Probably this organizational climate contributed to Joe's actions. Perhaps he did have some reason to feel that his behavior was in the company's interest. The means may have been questionable, but at least he had been successful in keeping his men happy and morale at a high level. It is hard to judge the influence of this factor. It certainly could not account in and of itself for what occurred, but it may well have been a contributory cause.

It is possible that some might consider Joe's reaction to his group as reflecting strong cultural values related to loyalty and "squealing." Yet he actually gave the company's money to men who had not earned it, and he lied about their behavior. In this sense he was without question dishonest. Also, it is not certain that Joe was completely convinced he had done the right thing. For a time he tried to deny his complicity, and thus to avoid the disciplinary action he clearly anticipated. Probably it is best, therefore, to view his behavior as representing more of a response to group than to cultural pressures. It is not widely held that a man in his position should have acted as he did.

Situational forces appear to be similarly absent. There is no reason to believe that Joe's behavior derived from anxiety precipitated by a subjective danger situation. He was not so much afraid of his own impulses and wishes in the managerial job as he was desirous of obtaining the approval of his men. He did not avoid managing; he preferred something else more and thus ended by not fulfilling the demands of his managerial role.

Let us take up the various possibilities for change. The motive which led to Joe's difficulties was deep-seated and dominant: Almost more than anything else, he wanted to be accepted and popular within a group. There seems little chance that the motive itself could have been changed within a reasonable period of time. On the other hand, the resulting behavior possibly could have been integrated with job demands. Joe's loyalty might conceivably have been transferred from the worker group to the manager group. Unfortunately, however, by the time his performance deficiencies became known it was too late for this. To continue him as a foreman or in any other managerial capacity would have been almost impossible. The company was not that overpermissive, and certainly there are few firms which can afford to be. Keeping him in a management position would have established an example for others which could have produced devastating consequences.

For this reason the possibility that he could have been transferred to another supervisory position does not appear to offer an appropriate solution. There are, moreover, other factors which would have made this course of action questionable. If Joe had been put in charge of another cohesive group, the chances are good that much the same thing would have happened again. It might not have been the time cards this time, but a man who is as sensitive as Joe to group pressure cannot possibly continue to act in accordance with the requirements of his managerial position when there is any conflict between that role and the demands of his group. If, on the other hand, an attempt had been made to minimize these pressures by selecting a noncohesive group, Joe would have experienced a sharp frustration of one of his strongest motives. The exact result of this blocking process cannot be predicted, but there is a real possibility that some other type of performance failure would have appeared.

It seems, then, that some type of demotion along the lines actually taken offers the most appropriate solution. This not only serves to rectify the original placement error, but represents a shift away from the pattern of overpermissiveness which seemed to characterize the plant. Once removed from the ranks of management Joe should have had no further difficulty, at least as a result of group factors. The conflict between his typical response to cohesive pressures and his job demands was removed by the change in occupational requirements. In addition, a sizable reduction in rank and pay should have served the purpose of maintaining adequate motivation and standards within the organization. It seems improbable that firing would have accomplished this goal any more effectively. Keeping Joe around provided a constant reminder that certain kinds of behavior could result in disciplinary action.

Although the move actually made appears to be correct in principle, the specific change is open to question. Joe was well into his forties by this time, and loading-crew work is likely to be physically very demanding. It is generally most suitable for younger men. If the ex-foreman is to remain in a lower-level position, the loading crew does not appear an appropriate spot. In time the physical demands will almost inevitably become excessive. Also, Joe has valuable experience that could be used more effectively in a direct-production job. It is very possible that he may fail again if he remains on the loading crew. This prospect could be avoided by placing him in a position where experience rather than physical strength would provide the key to success. Probably, in view of events, it was wise not to demote Joe within his existing group, however. There is a good chance that mutual recriminations will continue there for some time to come, and a sizable decrease in cohesion may well occur. This is not the kind of social environment in which Joe performs most effectively. In fact, he might well have been actively rejected by his former subordinates, with very detrimental consequences for his work.

Case 3

INDUSTRIAL SALESMAN:
WILLARD DAVISON

Willard Davison entered the company's employ in a relatively unique manner. The process started when his father-in-law called the president and asked if there was a position available that Will might be able to handle. A note subsequently traveled down through channels and landed on the desk of the man in charge of sales recruiting. The note indicated only that this was a young man whom the president felt might be useful to the organization and that the young man's father-in-law owned a firm which for many years had been a major purchaser of the company's products. Shortly thereafter, Will was asked to come into the personnel office. He was interviewed and hired. Having had prior work experience, including some selling, he was placed directly as a salesman. He would attend the sales training school and then double up for about two months with the man currently in his territory. Subsequently that man would be transferred and Will would take over.

From the beginning it was apparent that the company had not gained a particularly effective salesman. During the two-month field training period, the two men traveled together, but the other man did the work. Frequently Will stayed in the car or in a nearby bar, if he could find one, while their business was being transacted. The old-timer, who was considered one of the top salesmen in the company, was very happy to be out of the situation when the two months were over. He had had practically no assistance in performing his job and, in addition, had to find his partner when he wandered off, had to get him up in the morning, and had somehow to find a way to force him to learn something about the territory and the products he was supposedly selling. It had not been easy.

Will remained in the territory for four years. During that time it slumped from its previous high position to one somewhat below the company average. Most of the drop occurred within the first year. The thing that disturbed the sales manager most, however, was that sales continued at the same relatively low level in spite of a large amount of new industrial construction in the area which should have produced a lot of new business. As far as could be determined, Will rarely, if ever, called on these new plants. It was not surprising that competitors got their business. As time went on it became increasingly clear that the job was being handled poorly in other respects. Customers became angry because the salesman failed to keep many of his appointments. Orders were often delivered late because the salesman had delayed several days before putting them through to the regional office. The salesman didn't know anything regarding several new products that customers had asked about after seeing advertising material on them. On occasion the salesman had gone to sleep in the waiting room when unable to see a purchasing agent immediately. He spent a considerable part of his time playing golf rather than on the job. The only reason Will was retained in a sales capacity was that no one knew what else to do with him. He had been repeatedly informed of the unsatisfactory nature of his performance, but with no effect.

Finally, after a change of regional managers, he was brought into the office and put to work in a job involving primarily clerical duties connected with product distribution. It was hoped that the increased surveillance possible in the office might permit a greater control over his activities. He was told at the time of transfer that he was considered only barely satisfactory as a salesman, if that, and that a considerable improvement in performance would be expected. Will agreed that he had not done a very good job in the field, but felt he could do better.

During his two and a half years in the office his superiors became increasingly dissatisfied. He was almost invariably late arriving in the morning and his absence record was unusually poor. He showed practically no enthusiasm regarding his work, although he was greatly interested in a large range of outside activities: golf, sailing, horseback riding, bridge, football, sports cars, etc. He and his wife were very active in the social life of the community, spending considerable time at the country club and entertaining frequently.

When Will's failures were called to his attention or when he was pushed to complete work for which others were waiting, he often became resistant and stubborn. Pressure and criticism had only a minimal effect. He seemed to take the attitude that nobody had a right to tell him what to do, that if they didn't like his work they could find someone else to do it. On other occasions when discussing these problems with his boss, he would frankly admit that he was not performing at the level generally expected, but he somehow conveyed the impression that he didn't care much. When he did work, he was quite capable of doing a satisfactory job, although he showed little evidence of initiative in going beyond what was expected. Errors in his reports were not unusually frequent, although it should have been possible to eliminate them entirely if he had been willing to take the time to check his work.

The culmination was a final decision to put Will on probation for two months. If there was no improvement during that time, he would have to find a job elsewhere. This decision was reached only after consultation at rather high levels in the company. To lose the business provided by Will's father-in-law would certainly represent a most unfortunate consequence. Every effort should be made, therefore, to keep him if he could perform at even a minimally effective level.

As the end of the two months neared, it was evident that Will's performance could not by any stretch of the imagination be called satisfactory. The pile of uncompleted work on his desk was as high as it had ever been, and he had missed several days from work which just happened to coincide with the beginning of the hunting season. The question of what to do now was passed rapidly up through channels until it settled firmly on the desk of the industrial relations vice-president. The latter assembled all the information available, utilizing both personnel records and data provided by some of his friends who were familiar with the Davison family, and came up with the following picture.

Young Will had been a problem to his family for many years. He had been sent to a military prep school which was strong on discipline but not very scholastically demanding. There he had maintained a barely satisfactory record in his course work while participating in one escapade after another. He probably would have been thrown out of school long before graduation day had it not been for two factors. His family was a major contributor to the various fund campaigns which were conducted each year, and the headmaster had interpreted Will's behavior as a personal challenge to his ingenuity. Somehow the boy not only graduated, but as a result of a surprisingly good performance on his college entrance examinations gained admission to a small but well-regarded college.

Free of military school discipline, however, Will devoted his efforts to having a good time and flunked out at the end of the first year. He then entered a college in the South which was particularly desirous of attracting Northern students, and eventually he graduated. Shortly thereafter he married and entered the employ of his father-in-law's firm with the objective of learning the various aspects of the business and perhaps eventually rising to a position at a policy-making level.

After about three years, however, there had apparently been a change of plans, and it was then that the father-in-law had assisted Will in obtaining a position with his present employer. The official explanation was that he was expected to gain broadening experience through exposure to the policies and procedures of another company. There were persistent rumors, however, that family relationships had been badly strained as a result of the young man's poor showing on the job and his frequent vacations. The father-in-law had apparently proposed, and perhaps forced, the job change as a solution to an intolerable situation.

The vice-president's study of the problem produced some additional information. Will and his wife both came from families with considerable money. Both families had been generous in their financial gifts to their children, with the result that the young Davisons were very well off. In addition, the family pressures were such that Will would almost certainly have to be reemployed by his father-in-law's firm if he should lose his present position. Will had apparently been aware of this fact for some time.

Armed with this information, the vice-president decided that the risks were not too great and that Will should be replaced. After further discussion, which this time included the president himself, this conclusion was accepted and the young man was fired at the end of his probation period. As had been anticipated, this had no effect on purchases of the company's products.

Performance Analysis

Intelligence can be largely ruled out as a factor. Both the sales and the clerical jobs are below the top level in terms of verbal demand. From Willard Davison's family background, from his performance on the college entrance tests, and from the fact of college graduation, it may be inferred that his mental ability was adequate to the work. His two jobs required somewhat different constellations of special abilities, yet the performance failures were almost identical. That special abilities were strategic thus seems improbable. There was some deficiency in job knowledge in evidence during Will's tenure as a salesman; he failed to keep informed about new products. This, however, would account for only a limited aspect of his failure. He had had experience in sales work before and had completed the normal training. It seems probable, therefore, that his lack of knowledge was as much attributable to motivational factors as to intellectual. The relatively small significance of the job-knowledge aspect in the total picture is further attested to by the fact that this type of deficiency did not appear in the clerical job.

In the emotional area there are two possibilities that require discussion. Some of Will's behavior suggests that he might have been avoiding certain situations which caused him to experience anxiety. There were so many things that he just did not do. On the other hand, his pattern of failure in the office situation was almost identical with that manifested in the field. In two totally different jobs and environments he produced practically the same behavior. This does not look like a typical anxiety reaction. Furthermore, there is a real question whether Will was avoiding what he feared or merely doing what he preferred. If the absences during hunting season and the time off taken to play golf are characteristic, it would appear that the latter provides a better explanation. It is known that he had many interests outside his job. Since, in addition, there is no evidence of severe anxiety, it seems appropriate to conclude that this factor was probably not strategic.

It is still possible, however, that another type of emotional factor did play a causal role. Could Will's behavior be accounted for as reflecting a sullen anger, a negativism toward those holding authority over him? Was he basically in rebellion, to a point where his hatred made it impossible for him to work? Again the answer would appear to be no, although the possibility of some such influence cannot be entirely ruled out. On the surface, at least, he appeared to lack enthusiasm for his work rather than to be angered by it. When pushed and criticized, he did become resistant and stubborn, but this is not an uncommon response under the circumstances. Furthermore, he freely admitted on several occasions that his work was not up to par. He was not mad at anyone; he just did not seem to care. And he was equally ineffective whether he was under pressure from his superiors or left to his own devices. He responded poorly to the period of probation, but he did no better when he was on his own as a salesman.

Even more detrimental to the rebellion hypothesis, he seemed entirely willing to accept help from people senior to him. He took the money his family gave him, joined the country club, and allowed his father-in-law to assist him in gaining employment. This is certainly not the typical pattern of a young man in rebellion against his parents and other established authority. If anger and negativism were in any way involved, they almost certainly affected performance through the motivational patterns thus established, rather than influencing it directly. He did not consistently manifest emotion of this kind whenever his work was below standard.

Will's lack of enthusiasm for his jobs and his preference for a great variety of nonwork activities have already been noted. This and other evidence suggests that there was a basic problem in the motivational area. The older and more experienced salesman was left to do all the work during the two-month training period. Will was usually to be found in a bar, in the car, or in bed. Throughout his period as a salesman he was absent often, on many occasions to play golf. He failed to solicit new business in spite of an expansion of industrial activity in his area. Appointments with customers were often broken, and orders arrived late because Will did not get around to sending them in. He even went to sleep in the reception room while waiting to see several purchasing agents. His lack of knowledge regarding new products has already been noted.

The pattern in the office again suggests a young man who finds little satisfaction for his primary motives in the job situation. He was late and absent often. Enthusiasm for his work was low, although in other areas such as sailing, bridge, sports cars, and the like, it was high. He rarely checked his reports and was usually behind schedule. There was often a huge pile of uncompleted work on his desk. Will clearly found his satisfaction in life outside the job situation. In fact, this tendency is so marked that it is difficult to determine from a knowledge of his work behavior exactly what his dominant motives were. Whatever they did involve, he apparently did not see job-integrated activity as a means to their attainment.

Furthermore, these motivational difficulties do not seem to be specific to any one job or situation. They were present in both the sales and clerical positions, but apparently there was more to the problem than that. Will had consistently failed throughout his life, usually because of motivational factors. He would have been thrown out of military school but for parental intervention, and he did flunk out of college in spite of satisfactory marks on his entrance examinations. In both cases he devoted most of his energies to having a good time. Subsequently he did graduate from another school which had considerably lower standards. Yet he apparently failed in his first job, in part, at least, because of his continued absence from work. And this job was with a firm run by his father-in-law, where one might expect that the demands placed on him would be light. In fact, Will would appear to be something of a playboy. From what evidence is available, it looks as if his deficiencies in work motivation were generalized.

This behavior does not seem to be of a kind which might be explained in physical terms. In the area of family factors, however, there is some reason to suspect a strategic cause. Will's father-in-law had obtained the sales job with the company for him, as well as the original position which he had held after completing college. In fact, it was generally assumed that as a favored son-in-law he would eventually return to a high office in the family firm. Will himself had every reason to believe that this would be the case and that, should he lose his present position, he would be guaranteed other employment by virtue of his family connections. Furthermore, both families had provided him with all the money needed to live comfortably and indulge his various interests. Apparently they had also provided him with a certain social status, which he found very enjoyable.

In fact, throughout his life Will had been protected from experiencing the consequences of his actions. This pattern continued to operate during the period of his employment with the company. He was almost certainly aware of the pressures which had induced the company to retain him on the payroll in spite of his unsatisfactory performance. He also knew that he would not remain long among the ranks of the unemployed if these pressures should prove insufficient. What appears as an excessive degree of irresponsibility might, therefore, be interpreted as in large part attributable to family factors. Will had no reason to fear failure. As long as his parents and his wife's parents continued to provide the means to satisfy his desires and continued to protect him against the possibility of what he might consider failure, he had little reason to exert himself at work or to live up to existing company standards.

Compared with these external factors, any internal group determinants appear insignificant. Will worked under various managers and in associations with a number of different people, and his level of performance remained much the same. It is improbable that a work group was strategic; if anything, his superiors went well beyond normal expectations in their attempts to help Will.

Many of the decisions regarding the handling of the situation were, of course, basically organizational in nature. The young man's family connections gave his difficulties a significance which extended far beyond the confines of his immediate work group. Nevertheless, this case history does illustrate clearly the time and attention that a single ineffective performer can require. In spite of all this company involvement, however, there is nothing that would suggest any contribution to failure from the organizational level. The initial training was entirely adequate, especially for a man with sales experience. Various types of corrective action were initiated, including transfer, attempts to enforce standards, and a probationary period. If we are right in assuming that Will's lack of work motivation was of a general nature, then there can be no placement error. Wherever he was assigned, he would have failed.

At the level of the society as a whole, there is nothing that would suggest a strategic role. Will's problems were in the area of individual motivation; they did not have cultural origins. Situational forces were also minimal. He continued to fail in a number of different environments and under a variety of circumstances. This is not consistent with the idea of situational causation. The young man clearly carried his propensities for failure with him wherever he went and, with the unwitting assistance of his family, imposed them on the particular milieu in which he happened to find himself.

Any change in this situation would have been extremely difficult. Without a major shift in family attitudes and behavior, any use of negative motivation to foster more satisfactory performance appears impossible. Will had no reason to fear failure. He showed this clearly in his reactions to criticism of his work and to the probationary period. Short of the threat of actual bodily harm, an alternative clearly not available, there is little that can be done to arouse the specter of fear in such cases. On the positive side the prospects are equally dim. Ideally some strong motive would be located and a method of satisfaction provided within the job. But there is nothing to suggest how this might be accomplished in Will's case. No motives which offer a potential for integration with work demands are in evidence. A check back on his educational and occupational history provides no clue; the record of continuing failure is complete. Wherever there is any indication of success at all, it appears to have resulted from a lowering of standards to meet Will's performance level.

There is, of course, a possibility that the company might have brought about some change in the family factor. However, this is outside the normal sphere of managerial influence, and the risks are extremely high. No one had any idea how family members might react to direct contact from the company. The best bet is that any implied criticism of Will would have aroused considerable resentment. Also, the prospect of bringing about any major change would appear slight. The situation had existed for many years, and it is reasonable to assume that it was deeply rooted in family relationships. Probably an attempt to discuss the matter directly with the family would have created more problems than it would have solved. In the writer's opinion it is wiser to restrict efforts to deal with cases such as this to the working environment. There are too many unknown factors within most family constellations to risk company involvement.

It may be concluded, therefore, that dismissal was an appropriate solution in this instance. The chances of finding a satisfactory working situation within the company seem to have been almost infinitesimal. It is, however, hard to justify the tremendous investment in time and lost business that the company made in this man. What was done at the end of six and a half years could almost certainly have been done at the end of a year or a year and a half. Probably the risks would have been even less at an earlier date. "From the beginning it was apparent that the company had not gained a particularly effective salesman."

Case 4

MACHINE OPERATOR:
FRANK KRASNOSKI

Frank Krasnoski, having worked for the company before, was given only a cursory screening in the personnel office before being accepted. His previous employment record looked satisfactory, and there was a recommendation in the file indicating that his old boss would gladly rehire him. Furthermore, the labor market in the area was tight at the time due to the opening of several new plants.

Actually, had it not been for these factors, the personnel man who interviewed him might well have raised some questions. Frank had left the company after two years as a machine operator to enlist for a hitch in the Navy. However, his application for reemployment indicated he had served for only a little over a year. Subsequently he had apparently entered the state university, but there was a period of approximately six months between his discharge and the time he started school which was unaccounted for on the application form. His exposure to higher education had apparently been brief. Within a year he had started on the first of a series of sales jobs ranging from door-to-door encyclopedia selling to work on a used car lot. In each instance Frank had noted the reason for termination as either "temporary position" or "layoff, insufficient work." There were sizable gaps between several of these periods of work. At no time during the preceding two years had he held a position for more than six months.

In fact, during the brief employment interview, the question of why Frank was now applying for work at the plant did come up. He indicated only that he was fed up with selling, that he had found the work very unpleasant and the people he worked with even more so.

Since his former foreman was still with the company and in addition was short several men, the obvious course was to reassign Frank to his old group. Within an hour after arriving at the personnel office, he was back in the shop. Some of the faces were, of course, new, but a surprising number were familiar. The foreman was glad to see the new addition to his group. He remembered him as a rather quiet young man, not much trouble to anyone, who kept largely to himself but nevertheless turned out quite satisfactory work. The only possible criticism might have been in the matter of speed. He never had been one to break any production records, although he seemed to work steadily enough. But this was practically no criticism at all in comparison with some of the opinions the foreman had of the work being done by the new men who had started with him in the last six months. He was very happy indeed to see a man like Frank show up.

However, by the end of the first day the foreman was not so sure of his feelings. Things were not working out as well as expected. Frank seemed strange. He had given no evidence of being pleased to be back with the old gang again. In fact, some of the older men had commented on the change in him. He seemed at times to be a completely different man. This was particularly true right after he had talked with some other member of the group. The foreman noticed that whenever one of these conversations ended, Frank would stand by his machine for a while staring off into space. Then finally he would smile to himself and slowly start to work. In addition, there were several times during the afternoon when he was away from his job for as long as a half hour. On each such occasion he was finally located in the men's room. He would emerge looking nauseated and depressed. It was obvious to the foreman that he would have to have a long talk with his new man the next day. Something was really wrong.

When work started in the morning, however, Frank was not there. The foreman waited about two hours and then called the personnel office. They had had no word either, but said they would check into the matter. Shortly afterward the personnel man called back. They had contacted Frank's home and spoken with his mother. She said that he had an upset stomach and was very nervous. He just could not make it in to work. There was no indication why he had failed to call and notify his foreman. The mother would let them know tomorrow how he was coming along.

The following morning the foreman received a call from her shortly after the work day started. Frank had gone to see the family doctor and had been advised that he needed a thorough rest. He would not be in to work for the rest of the week. The foreman obtained the doctor's name and address before hanging up. A call to the doctor yielded rather startling results: Mr. Krasnoski had not been in the office in over two months. The foreman called Frank's home again and spoke with his mother. She said she was sorry to have provided incorrect information, but that it was her impression Frank was going to the doctor when he left the house. She would have him call the plant as soon as he got back. There was no further word during the rest of the day.

That evening the foreman drove by the house on his way home, but it was dark, and he saw no point in stopping. The next morning the mother called again and said her son had applied for admission to the VA hospital and expected to be admitted in the next few days. The foreman asked to speak with him, but was told that would be impossible. Several questions regarding Frank's condition and the extent to which events of this nature had occurred in the past yielded evasive replies. Finally, the foreman decided that there was no alternative but to terminate employment as of that date. The mother raised a few objections, but seemed actually to be rather resigned to the idea that her son would lose his job. It was agreed that his check would be sent to his home.

Performance Analysis

Any analysis of Frank Krasnoski's performance is handicapped by the paucity of the available data. Nevertheless, the general theme stands out clearly. This is not an unusual situation when an employee suffers from an emotional disorder. As a result of the twin motives of family shame and individual anxiety, a screen is often created to keep the details of the breakdown from the man's employer. Yet the nature of the screen itself serves as a valuable guide in establishing the general characteristics of the process which is under way, even if a detailed diagnosis cannot be made.

There is no evidence, even within the confines of a single day, that Frank lacked the intellectual requirements for his job. He had, in fact, performed the work satisfactorily for two years. In addition, his college attendance suggests at least average intelligence. On the other hand, the behavior exhibited during Frank's brief period on the job was of a kind which occurs frequently in emotional disorder. His actions were, to say the least, strange. Those who had known him prior to his entering the Navy felt the change and commented on how different he seemed. In fact, there is some possibility that he may have been experiencing visual or auditory hallucinations during his periods of inactivity beside his machine. The indications are not conclusive. Many people stare off into space in this manner, although perhaps not so frequently or so consistently in response to social stimulation.

The evidence for a severe emotional disorder extending back over several years, although somewhat circumstantial, is rather convincing. The premature discharge from naval service suggests some type of disability or perhaps disciplinary action. The ensuing six months are unaccounted for, but the possibility cannot be ignored that Frank's admission to a Veterans Administration hospital after his most recent employment was not his first admission. Unfortunately no check on the nature of his service discharge was made at the time of hiring, but there would seem to be a good possibility that he was discharged from service directly to a VA hospital. The period of educational and occupational instability which followed discharge, however, is typical of the pattern found among those suffering from a chronic psychotic condition. That Frank tried to establish himself as a salesman is surprising, although the availability of employment may have been a factor. That he was a consistent failure and eventually became disillusioned with the work comes as no surprise. Withdrawal from social relationships and the development of distorted conceptions of others' motives are characteristic in psychoses with anxiety predominating, and this man appears to be suffering from a borderline condition of this kind, at the very least. It is not likely that an individual possessing such characteristics would be a successful salesman.

The events following the single day of employment suggest either a recurrent disorder which was reactivated at the plant or, perhaps a gradual breakdown which was already under way before the rehiring. Frank's mother was obviously covering up something not only with regard to his past but also with regard to his present condition. It seems likely that he became much more severely disturbed after his day of work, and that his state was one with which his mother was familiar. She mentioned that he had become very nervous. The admission to a VA hospital could only have been for a physical or an emotional disorder. In view of the slender evidence which might support the former hypothesis, the latter tends to gain credence.

Frank did, of course, have some physical symptoms. His nausea at the plant, and his mother's report of an upset stomach, indicate that a physical factor did contribute to his absence from work and consequently to his performance failure. But the context in which these symptoms are found suggests strongly that they were of emotional origin. Physical disturbances of this type are not uncommon concomitants of more severe emotional pathology. Of course, they may also reflect an underlying stomach disorder having no relationship to emotional causation. But it is difficult to account in purely physical terms for the other aspects of Frank's behavior and for his mother's evasive answers to questions. It seems likely that the nausea was part of the overall emotional pattern.

Other factors appear to have had negligible impact. Motivation was not strategic. It was not that Frank did not want to work; he was apparently so overwhelmed by emotional and physical symptoms that he could not. Other than the stomach upset, there are no physical factors in evidence. Certainly the requisite muscular skills and dexterity must have been present, since he had previously performed satisfactorily in the same job. His fellow workers were generally favorably disposed toward Frank, at least those who had known him previously. The foreman was even more positive. He had considered the young man a definite asset during the previous period of employment and, in view of the current labor market conditions, was enthusiastic over the prospect of having him back. Nothing that happened at the group level during Frank's single day on the job seems adequate to account for his subsequent behavior. Similarly, everything we know about the family situation—and here our knowledge is limited to the mother—suggests an essentially positive influence. Mrs. Krasnoski was evidently trying to help her son. Of course, there may have been family factors of which we are not aware. Probably determinants of this kind are more likely than most to go undetected.

The organization contributed in the sense that there was a complete lack of action, presumably as a result of a prior investment decision. The foreman's dismissal of Frank appears to have been in accord with existing policy. Disability payments, psychiatric help, and special conditions of work were not to be provided. This is not surprising in view of the very brief period of employment and the high level of risk involved where the educational and occupational history is extremely unstable. To be of real value, any investment would have had to be a major one, and the time before a return on this investment might be realized was incalculable. Even in a tight labor market there are alternative, and probably more appropriate, methods of staffing an organization with hourly workers.

There is also some question regarding the way in which Frank was hired. Although it is probably overstating the case to contend that he failed because he was hired in the first place, the screening procedures were extremely meager. There was much in the man's history since leaving the firm to suggest emotional instability. Even his replies to questions during the brief interview seem to indicate problems in this area. Yet no real check on the man was made. The fact that once, at some time in the past, an individual is known to have performed effectively provides no proof that he is still capable of the same behavior.

Cultural values do not appear to be involved, but there may have been a situational factor. It is almost impossible to tell from the information available. Returning to the shop may have served to trigger an emotional breakdwn, or it may have accelerated an ongoing process. It seems probable that Frank had suffered from emotional disorder off and on ever since his naval service.

Exposure to the work situation could well have reactivated symptoms which had been quiescent for some time. On the other hand, the emotional disturbance might have been building up over a period of several months. It may have been no more than coincidence that things came to a head during this particular day. In fact, it is entirely possible that Frank was acutely ill when he walked in the door of the employment office. The screening process was not sufficiently comprehensive to rule out this explanation. It would be impossible to say whether environmental factors at work were in fact strategic, without more information than the foreman possessed.

Although three factors emerge as strategic, all are interrelated. The physical symptom was not sufficient in and of itself to account for the failure; therefore, purely medical treatment would not have been sufficient. Also, the stomach disorder would probably have been most effectively cured if handled as part of the emotional problem. Perhaps this man could have been restored to an effective performance level eventually, had the company been willing to wait and subsequently help him to readjust. As in all cases of this kind, it is impossible to say with certainty. The action taken by the foreman in discharging Frank should not be considered as an individual, unilateral act, however. It was carried out in a context of company policy. The man had failed to report an illness which kept him from work, he had failed to provide information on his illness, and he had at least an instrumental role in a false report regarding a medical opinion of his case. Purely on a disciplinary basis there is sufficient reason for discharge. In addition, the man had worked only one day and was apparently going to be absent from his job for an extended period. Under the circumstances there would appear to be little a manager could do but resort to dismissal.

Even from a humanitarian viewpoint there was little reason for the company to become involved in Frank's case. He had been accepted for admission to a VA hospital and would receive adequate treatment there. In cases involving severe psychosis of the type apparently existing here, community action seems most appropriate. The probability of a permanent and total cure within a reasonable period of time is sufficiently low so that it is inappropriate to expect an organization with primarily economic goals to invest in the rehabilitation process. Should Frank become capable of effective performance once again at some later date, he could, of course, apply to the company for reemployment.

Case 5

STORE MANAGER:

EDWARD KAPLAN

Edward Kaplan had a number of job offers when he graduated from college in spite of the fact that his major, anthropology, hardly fitted him for a specific position in business. His background was, however, attractive in many ways. He had lived in various parts of the world when his father was shifted from one assignment to another, and as a result he spoke several languages fluently. His education before college had included two years at one of the best Eastern preparatory schools and his marks throughout were good. In the end he accepted one of the less lucrative opportunities, a fact which rather surprised his roommate. It eventually became known, however, that his father had joined this particular company as a vice-president three years before. The company operated a number of retail stores spread over a large portion of the United States. Ed was to start in the training program for store managers. He made it clear, when his father's connection with the company became known to his friends, that he was going to work his way up from the bottom without any help from anyone and that someday he would be sitting where his father was now.

Initially, however, he seemed to be off on the wrong foot. His supervisor in the training program was very critical. The young man lacked a sense of responsibility. He was good at telling others what to do, but when his turn came nothing was accomplished. Also, he seemed very slow to learn, a fact which seemed surprising in view of his college record and known high level of intelligence. Things just did not stick with him, especially the specific procedures that the company followed in filing orders, personnel reports, and the like. He made a number of mistakes, and the supervisor did not hesitate to tell him about them. Ed was somewhat cowed by all this and he showed it. Things were not working out as he had planned and he thought several times of quitting. At college he had been considered something of an eccentric but was nevertheless popular. His escapades had attracted considerable attention. Here he was a nothing, and not even very good at that.

The supervisor thought Ed would leave. He might be related to a vice-president, but he had not inherited much aggressiveness. The boy looked like a quitter. He was immature, almost childish on occasion—anything to get attention. Yet in the end these very characteristics kept Ed going. As the supervisor thought about it after the boy had moved on to his first permanent assignment, he saw that things had reached a point where quitting was out of the question. A man like that, once he realizes people expect him to do one thing, has to do just the opposite to prove how little they know. Edward Kaplan was obviously the kind who is always trying to show that he knows more and is smarter than anyone else, especially his superiors. He certainly would bear watching.

Surprisingly enough, the reports that came back from the new, and for that particular company, rather large store where he went to work were quite good. He shifted from one department to another, learning the various aspects of the business and the problems. There were times when he was a little remiss in following procedures and in telling his supervisors about things of which they should have been notified, but he did work hard. The consensus was that he was maturing rapidly and that his difficulty during the initial period should not be taken too seriously. Only his original training supervisor remained in doubt. Luckily for Ed, that supervisor was not consulted when he was considered for, and given, his first promotion to a managerial position.

Things continued to go well. The young man obviously felt he was getting somewhere. In fact, he seemed to consider himself something of a fair-haired boy who was about to break all records for progress in the company. This made for several rather unpleasant episodes involving Ed and one of his associates at the same level. However, his superiors tended to condone his brashness, feeling it was much better than the lack of aggressiveness which he had exhibited during the early months of his career with the company. Also, he seemed to get much more done now that he had this sense of self-importance. It was not long before he was promoted to be assistant manager of one of the smaller stores.

During this period Ed had had practically nothing to do with his father. He never said anything about him, and by common consent the subject was avoided. They lived far apart in different cities, and there was no particular reason for the relationship to be mentioned. Contact with his parents was almost nonexistent, even when he got married. Word of their son's marriage came to the parents only about two weeks after the event as a result of a letter from his new wife. The general feeling among those who knew him well was that young Ed Kaplan was a little odd when it came to matters concerning his father. It was almost as if he did not want to admit that a man named Tom Kaplan worked for the company, or maybe even that such a person existed at all.

Rather unfortunately, a similar relationship, or lack of relationship, rapidly developed between the new assistant manager and his boss. The two rarely spoke to each other except on matters directly associated with running the store. Nevertheless, the store manager was impressed with his new assistant and recommended a sizable raise at the end of Ed's first year. The accompanying comment read, "This man is developing rapidly. He works hard and expects his subordinates to do the same. A very high type of person in every respect."

Over the next few years Ed continued to do well. The only difficulties arose when the manager was away on vacation or absent for some other reason. Then there was usually a long delay before the regular reports on the store's operation arrived at the central office. In the meantime there had often been a good deal of telephoning and memo writing. But the reports always did arrive finally, and the store maintained a steady increase in the volume of business. There was no basis for more than the most superficial criticism. Ed was, however, rather young and even after several years in this job was not considered ready to run a store on his own. Promotions to store manager did not occur every day.

Nevertheless, it was not long before Ed Kaplan took over as one of the youngest store managers in the company. It all happened very suddenly. Ed was attending a meeting at the central office for his area. While there, he went in to talk to the general manager. He asked to be put in charge of a store. The manager was initially both shocked and skeptical. No one had ever just walked in and asked for a promotion of that kind before. Yet as the discussion progressed, this initial reaction began to shift. It was not so much what Ed said, although after he recovered from his surprise the manager did rather like the young man's brashness and courage. The major factor was the possibility that old Tom Kaplan might well be very pleased to see his son move up so fast. True, father and son were not very close, and certainly Tom had never in any way attempted to influence his son's career in the company. But, any parent would have to be proud of his boy's success, and the person responsible for recognizing that the son was a chip off the old block might well be rewarded in some way. Ed left the office with an assurance that he would be promoted, but that it would take a few days to work out his exact placement.

Within ten days word arrived that he was to become manager of a small store in a city located near a rather large mining operation. Unfortunately for the whole area, however, the mines were now producing only a fraction of what they had previously, and there was considerable unemployment. There had, in fact, been some talk recently about shutting the store down. The company and several competitors all had opened stores in the city during a more prosperous period. Now the volume of business was down for everyone, and the major argument for keeping the stores open was the prospect that new employers might move into the area. The company did not expect its store to show a gain in sales. Under present conditions maintaining a constant sales record would be quite satisfactory. To do this would require a gain in percentage of the market, since the total of business available to the company and its competitors was shrinking. Perhaps some continued loss in volume would have to be tolerated for a while.

Ed was given this particular assignment as a result of an unusual set of circumstances. The manager, having already committed himself on the promotion, checked with personnel and was told that young Kaplan could not be recommended for advancement at this time. There were too many good men with a much longer period of company service than he. This largely ended any discussion with the personnel people, and the manager continued his arrangements without further reference to personnel or the employment history of the man he was trying to place. It was clear that no present store manager could be removed in order to make an opening. That would only have produced more trouble in a situation that had already become rather difficult. The one possibility was the store in the mining area. The manager there had just retired and an opening did exist. The problem was that the assistant manager of the store had been sent there a year before with every expectation that he would take over when the older man retired. Ed was put in charge instead, and the assistant manager remained as assistant manager. Clearly Ed Kaplan was not moving into an easy situation, but perhaps a brash young man of his temperament was exactly what was required under the circumstances.

Ed was elated when he learned where he was to be sent. Here was a real opportunity to show what he could do. He fully expected to reverse the trend of the last few years and, within a year at the most, have the volume of sales on the way up again. He knew about the depressed conditions in the area and he knew his competitors were trying to increase their share of the market, but on the other hand the previous manager had been an old man on the verge of retirement. A younger person like himself with some initiative should be able to make a reputation for himself.

It was not that easy. The assistant manager, as everyone expected, was displeased at having been passed over, and he showed it. He did his job, but his presence made Ed acutely uncomfortable. It would have been easier if he could have been fired, but he was obviously far too competent for that. In fact, in his weaker moments Ed often thought his assistant was far more qualified to run the store than the man who was doing it. Thoughts like that were terribly disconcerting for a man like Edward Kaplan.

The trouble was that things were obviously not going well, according to the store manager's standards. The decline in sales continued at about the same rate as before in spite of every effort to reverse the trend. Nobody else was surprised at this and certainly no one was critical. People in the area were not earning enough to permit things to be otherwise. In addition, one of the competitive stores had recently been modernized, and another had been taken over by a company which was known for its frequent sales and discounted prices. It was clear that this company was trying to drive the competition out of town. It had already increased its share of the market to some extent, although probably this had been accomplished by running the store at a loss.

Ed became quieter and quieter. He could see his dream of outstanding success disintegrating, and there was little he could do about it. He was no longer a shining light in the company, just another store manager. He could not cut prices any lower under company policy, and if he did not get them down to a competitive level in a town where people had plenty of time to shop for bargains and little money to pay for luxuries, there was no chance of increasing sales. For him it was not enough to do the best job possible under the circumstances.

By the end of the first year Ed was totally cowed. He felt that he had failed. His dream had gone. Personal effort and hard work would not reverse the situation. This town had beaten him. He was very touchy, and his subordinates preferred to avoid him, since his moods were unpredictable. Much of the time he was excessively sarcastic. The reports again became a problem and this, combined with several other things, finally started management at the central office wondering. Ed was stocking some items in excessive quantity even though they did not sell. The turnover rate for store personnel was very high, whereas in the past it had been low, presumably because of the widespread unemployment in the area. The assistant manager asked to be transferred to another store, as an assistant manager, if necessary. The store manager was using poor judgment in a number of respects. Worst of all, he had lost the aggressive brashness that had in the past appeared to be his greatest asset. He seemed like a different man. He was at times vindictive and demanding, more often sullen and morose, and occasionally happy and elated if he proved to be right about something. But he accomplished less and less. The store began to lose customers to its competitors in large numbers.

Ed did little to rectify the situation other than to tell his subordinates that it was their job to find a solution.

Finally, before his superiors could act, he asked to be replaced in his job and given a leave of absence to work out his problems. He implied that he was too upset to continue where he was and that he had to get away from the situation immediately. Two months later, while still on leave, he resigned from the company to accept a position as a salesman with another firm.

Performance Analysis

Although Edward Kaplan was rather slow to learn during the period of his initial training, this cannot be accounted for in terms of any basic intellectual deficiency. He was a college graduate, had good marks in school, and was known to have a high level of intelligence. Furthermore, he did subsequently overcome these early difficulties and move on to similar positions with the company in which he performed very effectively. There is no doubt that he knew how to do the work. Yet at the time of his later failure, Ed consistently used very poor judgment in carrying out his job duties. He stocked certain items in excessive quantity, presumably in a desperate hope that he could sell them, and made some unfortunate decisions in handling his employees. This was in spite of the fact that he had previously, under somewhat different circumstances, performed satisfactorily in the same areas.

The explanation appears to be that when he became sufficiently upset, his emotions tended to interfere with his decisions. Although emotional disturbances were evident to some extent throughout the period of employment, there were only two times when problems of this kind became acute. During both these periods, intellectual deficiencies also emerged. As a trainee Ed was slow to learn and made many mistakes. He also appeared cowed and upset. His emotional reactions were childish, and there was an underlying element of sullen negativism in his behavior. Yet, on this occasion he overcame his problems and did not fail.

Later in the mining area, however, his intellectual inadequacies were coupled with more severe emotional reactions. He became upset and depressed. He was convinced that he was not capable of handling his job and that his assistant was more competent than he. Again, as during his training, he was cowed by events. He was moody and sarcastic; vindictive, sullen, and morose. Ed's emotional outbursts obviously antagonized his employees and contributed to the high turnover rate. Unable to control his emotions, he permitted them to interfere directly with his performance as a manager.

During the last few months of employment these emotional problems were intertwined with motivational factors. Young Ed Kaplan was very ambitious. He reacted to the taste of success with pleasure and maximum effort. When he expected to get ahead, he was enthusiastic and worked hard. He took the unusual step of asking to be made a store manager and appeared to relish the opportunity in being assigned to a depressed area where he might show what he could do. There is some suggestion, from his reaction to the original training supervisor, that he had an intense desire to prove himself superior to other people, especially to those above him in the company. In any event, his standards were extremely high. Success meant moving ahead very rapidly and achieving an increase in sales where no one else considered it possible.

Unfortunately, when Ed's hopes of obtaining the pleasure he anticipated in success began to fade, he reacted with emotional outbursts, bitterness, and resignation. Unable to achieve the unrealistically high standards he had set for himself, he experienced a sharp frustration of one of his dominant motives. His dream gone and his personal ambitions blocked, he gave up. His behavior changed completely. Instead of attempting to solve his problems, which eventually became real enough, even by company standards, he shifted them to his subordinates. Finally he left his job entirely, indicating that he was too disturbed to continue. In essence, he responded to frustration as his supervisor in the training program had feared he might: He quit.

There is reason to believe that Ed established the standards which eventually contributed to his downfall for reasons connected with his relationship to his father. Since the starting salary was not particularly good, it seems almost certain that he joined the company because of Tom Kaplan. Yet he had practically nothing to do with his father and made no effort to capitalize on the fact that he was related to a vice-president. It seems probable, therefore, that in making this occupational choice he was not attempting to obtain any special advantage—in spite of the subsequent course of events and the actions of the general manager.

Much more likely is the conclusion that he actually wanted to compete with his father and picked the company in order to do so. His words to his friends at college seem particularly significant. "He was going to work his way up from the bottom without any help from anyone . . . someday he would be sitting where his father was now." This kind of motivation is not uncommon. Also, it is consistent with the pattern of intense ambition and unrealistically high standards which Ed evinced. If the young man was to outdo his father, he clearly had to accomplish a great deal very rapidly.

In spite of the apparent role of parental factors in this motivation, there is nothing to suggest that the family was actually strategic. Tom Kaplan did nothing to contribute to his son's failure, nor did any other family member. Presumably, Ed had been competing with his father for years. This would account for his attempt to avoid contact and his rather strange behavior toward his father—the failure to talk about him and to notify him regarding the marriage, among other things. Probably Ed felt somewhat guilty about his desire to surpass his parent: particularly so if he had been tempted to resort to cutthroat techniques on occasion. Yet this pattern had presumably existed during periods of success and during failure.

Throughout the period of employment the young man had a series of conflicts with immediate group members. He was never particularly popular. All this seems to have mattered little insofar as his work was concerned, however. As a very successful assistant store manager, he maintained a relationship with his boss which was comparable to that with his father. Earlier, he had had trouble with his supervisor during training and with one of his associates after being promoted to his first management position. At the store in the mining area there were numerous problems with his assistant manager, problems which eventually led the junior man to request a transfer. Yet, except for the last instance, these group factors do not seem to have affected Ed at all. Even then, if business had been good and the store had been operating at a profit, there is little likelihood that he would have been bothered by the difficulties with his assistant manager. Edward Kaplan appears to have had a striking capacity to shrug off unpleasant relationships with other people, whether involving his father, his superiors, his fellow managers, or his subordinates. His desire for success was much stronger than his wish to be liked. Thus, he was relatively invulnerable to many types of group influence.

The decision to place Ed in the particular position was, of course, a contributory factor. The general manager made the assignment without extended consideration of the employment history and against the advice of the personnel department. The reservations of the training program supervisor were not taken into account. In fact, a major factor in the decision had nothing to do with the young man's potential level of effectiveness at all: The general manager hoped to enhance his own position with Ed's father. This, of course, did not guarantee that the placement would be erroneous, but when such extraneous factors are involved, the chances of success are reduced. In this case a mistake was made. The man was emotionally and motivationally too immature for the assignment. This is not to say he could not have performed effectively as a store manager under appropriate circumstances; in a more favorable environment he might well have done very well.

But Ed was assigned to a job, and to a situation, which in combination were strategic for failure. He had to be outstandingly successful, and in this particular context it was impossible. Economic forces in the situation thus combined with an incorrect placement decision and an existing motivational pattern to produce a major personality change, which brought with it considerable emotional and intellectual disturbance. The strategic economic factors were those usually found in a depressed economic area. The mines were not working, and therefore unemployment was high and purchasing power low. In addition, competing firms were employing tactics which further accentuated the detrimental aspects of the environment. One such store had been completely modernized, and another was cutting prices drastically in order to force other firms out of business. It would have been impossible to achieve sizable profits and a major increase in market share; yet Ed felt he had to do just that. When it became obvious even to him that his goal was impossible, he gave up and subsequently fell below company standards. The situation had beaten him. He became a casualty of economic warfare.

The two remaining areas do not require much discussion. Physical factors were obviously not involved. The job of a store manager does not make major demands of this kind and no physical symptoms, not even of emotional origin, were in evidence. Society and its values do not appear to have had an influence either. Ed's motivation was a personal matter, apparently associated with his feelings toward his father.

Since the intellectual, emotional, and motivational aspects of this case are interrelated, any action initiated to deal with one would have to take the others into account. An improvement in the intellectual sphere, for instance, would have to be achieved through some change in the emotional area. Yet the emotional reactions were precipitated primarily as a result of existing motivational patterns. Furthermore, there is reason to suspect that Ed's emotional problems were actually somewhat more severe than his behavior on the job would suggest. When a man suddenly takes a leave of absence because he is too upset to continue work and then resigns a good management position to accept a job as a salesman, there is every reason to believe that he is emotionally ill. Probably a great many symptoms which did not manifest themselves at work were in fact present.

Without knowledge of these any diagnosis is difficult, but from the evidence we have it would appear that Edward Kaplan suffered from a neurosis with depression and guilt predominating. If this is correct, then there is a good chance that he would benefit from psychotherapy. Treatment should produce a change in the dominance relationshps within his motivational hierarchy and a readjustment of work standards. As a result, Ed could eventually achieve the capacity to adapt to situational changes which he clearly lacked at the time of his failure.

Of course, it is not known whether Ed would have accepted a suggestion that he might benefit from psychotherapy. In view of the young man's obvious potential and previous performance record, however, it would seem that some such effort to retain him and to restore an effective level of work should have been made. This effort would presumably have had to include something more than psychotherapy, because treatment of this kind requires considerable time before the attempts to induce personality change can take effect. Since the failure was acute and the man's condition deteriorating rapidly, some action should have been taken immediately to correct the placement error and to remove him from the situational forces which were instrumental to his collapse. Ed, of course, finally did this himself in his own way. But it was not a way which offered the possibility of returning him to an effective level within the company.

If action had been taken quickly enough, he probably could have been transferred to another store where the potentialities for success were better. Obviously, to put him in charge of a location under existing circumstances would have been out of the question. But he could have been made an assistant manager once again in a store somewhat larger than the one he left to go to the mining area.

Making a transfer at times such as this is always a delicate matter, but it can be accomplished. Probably Ed should have been told quite frankly that his promotion had been a mistake and that he was not ready for that level of responsibility yet. At the same time an effort could have been made to convey the impression that his superiors still had faith in him and expected much of him in the future. If the young man's failure had been presented to him as a temporary reversal, necessitating certain changes, rather than as a complete failure, it is doubtful that he would have sought employment elsewhere. Also, tying the matter of psychotherapy in with the possibility of future occupational success might well have provided the motivation needed to make Ed seek treatment. This seems entirely appropriate, since with some help in overcoming his personality difficulties, he would in fact appear to have considerable potential for high-level achievement.

Case 6

RESEARCH CHEMIST:

JAMES WICKS

James Wicks had his initial discussions with representatives of the company several months before he finished his dissertation and actually obtained his doctorate. He was given a considerable amount of information, and the work in the research and development department was made to appear as attractive as possible. Qualified chemists were hard to find, and the company needed them badly if the expanded research effort recently decided on by the board of directors was to become a reality. Jim seemed a particularly desirable prospect because the man under whom he was doing his dissertation was well known for his work on certain organic compounds. There was some possibility that the company ought to get into this particular area on a large scale, and one of the best ways to find out was to hire the professor's most recent Ph.D.

Accordingly every possible inducement was offered. The salary was good, somewhat above the usual starting rate for men with a doctoral degree. Jim would be encouraged to carry out original research, much of it in areas related to his dissertation. In addition, there had recently been considerable discussion in the department about freeing all research people for 10 to 20 percent of their time in order to permit them to devote several days a month to their own research interests. The personnel recruiter was sure this policy would be approved and in fact, when pressed, guaranteed as much. The company was going to put considerable money into expanding the research effort. Several positions of the senior research-scientist type would be created and used to attract people with national reputations to the research and development department. There was every reason to believe the board would approve the construction of a new and separate research center. The recruiter had seen some of the architect's drawings, and there was no question that this center would provide the most up-to-date research facilities in the industry.

Jim was clearly impressed by the prospect of joining a growing research effort and by the inducements held out to him. He wanted to follow up on some of the leads developed by his research at the university, and this appeared an ideal place to do it. All the people he had talked with from the company seemed sincere and honestly interested in research. They appeared to be the kind of people who would stick by their promises and treat others fairly. That was important, and when he wrote his letter accepting the company's offer, he emphasized that it was a major factor in his decision.

In many respects, however, the company and the job did not live up to expectations. The fact that several months elapsed between the hiring date and the time Jim actually began work may have been a factor. So too may overzealous recruiting. In any event, by the end of the first week Jim was roaring mad. He would have quit right then had he not just moved his family halfway across the country and bought a new house. Also, he admitted that the company had invested a good deal of money in him by paying his moving expenses and that he had, as a result of the company's influence with a local bank, obtained favorable mortgage terms. It did not seem fair to walk out without giving the situation at least a few months to improve.

The company was having considerable difficulty in recruiting new personnel and otherwise expanding the research department. Three senior-scientist positions had been created, but filling them had proved to be much more of a problem than anticipated. As of the time Jim joined the company, no top-flight people had been attracted. This represented a real disappointment to a young man who had been looking forward to working with an experienced industrial research man of national stature. In fact, one of the senior-scientist positions had finally been filled from within. The man appointed had occupied a relatively high-level management position within the research and development department for a number of years and was generally considered a poor administrator. In Jim's opinion the man's scientific competence had been artificially inflated in order to justify moving him to a position without managerial responsibility. Jim had no compunction about making this opinion known. To a young scientist, such behavior on the part of an organization represented a perversion of the whole scientific value system. A man had to earn a reputation as an outstanding scientist through important research contributions; you did not just create such a designation for him overnight.

The difficulty in expanding the department had other negative implications. Jim was initially assigned to a development group consisting primarily of chemical engineers. The project they were working on was of considerable importance to the company and had to be completed as quickly as possible. As a result all new men with appropriate qualifications were to be assigned to the group. The work involved application problems and was far removed from the kind of basic research in organic compounds that Jim had anticipated continuing. When he complained, he was told that because of personnel shortages it had seemed inadvisable to open up new research areas at the present time. Consequently some of the more basic programs had been temporarily shelved. He would of course be removed from the development work as soon as it could possibly be accomplished—in a year at the very longest. The young scientist, when he heard this, went so far as to use the term "liar" in describing one of the people with whom he had talked at the time of his hiring. He was furious and did not hesitate to say so.

After several weeks had elapsed, he came to realize that in addition to being deprived of the opportunity to work with outstanding scientists on problems related to his own interests, he had also lost the free time to carry out his own research. He brought the matter up during a discussion with his supervisor, assuming that the policy had not yet been put into effect in his case because he was a new man. He then learned that although the idea had been accepted as department policy, each supervisor had been given discretionary power in its implementation. This meant that the supervisor could allocate up to one day every two weeks for personal research if he so desired. In actual fact no supervisor in the whole department had as yet done so. The pressure from top management to complete existing projects was so strong that no one wanted to risk initiating any procedure that might subvert this objective. Actually there was very little likelihood that the policy would ever be put into effect in development groups such as the one in which Jim now found himself. Finally, after an hour of heated debate, the two men agreed that policy could not be broken just to accommodate one man. The supervisor was frankly sorry about the whole mess, but there was very little he could do.

It was in fact almost eighteen months before Jim was moved into the type of research position for which he had been hired. There had been innumerable delays on the development project, and a man with his experience could not be released until it was terminated. He had complained to personnel and to some high-level people within the research and development department, but without success. During this period a number of people in both these groups had come to the conclusion that he was not entirely loyal to the company. They considered him lacking in tact and uncooperative. A similar opinion was held by some of the engineers with whom he worked.

Others, however, felt that, for whatever reason, the company had given him a bad deal and that he was justified in being angry. They pointed out that his bitterness was largely restricted to the matter of broken promises and that actually he had not hurt the company in any way. Perhaps he had helped it by pointing out some deficiencies. Unfortunately for Jim, the more negative viewpoint predominated in the personnel department, especially among the recruiters, and at the top levels of his own department. Nevertheless, he was considered a first-class research man and was given several salary increases based on merit. It was in many respects due to his efforts that the development project was completed as quickly as it was.

Shortly after moving into the organic-chemicals research group, he put in a request for a restudy of his job, contending that it had been rated too low and that he was being underpaid. There was considerable objection, especially within certain segments of the personnel department, but finally the restudy was initiated. Many were convinced that this was no more than another instance of contentiousness and that the job analysis was being carried out only because the young scientist could yell louder and bang the table harder than anyone else. Nevertheless, it was found, as he said, that his work was relatively free of direction by higher-level supervision and that the job grade should be raised. He was being paid at a rate below that to which his job entitled him.

Exactly a year later, he again requested a job study, maintaining that his work had changed sufficiently since the previous study to require a new evaluation. This time he got the restudy without delay. With his prior record of success in this area, it seemed inappropriate to contest his claim. But he also got something else. At the suggestion of the personnel department, a special appraisal panel was constituted to look into James Wicks's performance during his years with the company. This panel worked with considerable speed and very shortly produced its report.

There was no question about his technical competence. He was thoroughly conversant with the work in his field and was apparently making good progress in his research. His efforts had not been directed toward solving problems growing out of his dissertation, although recently he had been devoting his free day each month to this area. This failure to follow the course originally planned was, however, a result of certain misunderstandings and policy changes within the department. The scientist himself was not responsible.

On the other hand, there was a definite personality problem. He overevaluated his own importance to the organization and as a consequence demanded excessive attention from his superiors and from members of other departments. He lacked flexibility, did not have the capacity to understand the viewpoint of others, and could not accept criticism gracefully. Problems were created by virtue of the fact that many people did not like to work with him. This was, however, less in evidence in his present job than it had been previously. He was sometimes sarcastic, demanding, and excessively aggressive. His self-righteous attitude was particularly irritating to others. Furthermore, he had made some statements which suggested that he might prove disloyal to the company. This was particularly serious in a research man.

Once he had mentioned, in arguing for a research project, that a competing company would, he knew, be very happy to push work in that particular area. On another occasion he had been very critical of the way in which company personnel were assigned to research activities, and he had contrasted this approach, or lack of one, with the system used by another firm in the industry. His opinions regarding company personnel policy were by now almost legendary. All in all, he did not appear to be the type to whom the company should entrust knowledge of potentially patentable research discoveries. His behavior was such as to lead to the inescapable conclusion that he was antagonistic to the company's objectives and could not be trusted in his present work.

Within a week of the time this report was completed Jim was demoted and transferred to a position in the quality control division. He remained in this position under the jurisdiction of the manufacturing department until September, when he left without notice to accept a teaching position at a major university. Shortly after he had been moved from the research and development department, his former job was raised another grade level as a result of the restudy which he had requested.

Performance Analysis

Although the job of research chemist requires high levels of ability in several areas and extensive training, there is no reason to believe that James Wicks was lacking in any of these respects. He had a Ph.D. from a good university and had worked under one of the top men in his field. He was generally considered very competent technically by all who knew his work, including the members of the special appraisal panel convened to evaluate his performance. Also, failure did not occur in such dimensions as quality, quantity, or presence on the job. Jim was considered entirely satisfactory in these areas. His difficulties developed in relation to the fourth dimension of performance and concerned such matters as loyalty to the company and cooperation with others. Problems of this kind are unlikely to be caused by intellectual factors.

Emotional factors, on the other hand, can easily contribute to this type of failure, and in this instance they unquestionably did. Jim became angry frequently, and he made little effort to suppress his feelings. One such blowup had already occurred by the end of his first week with the company. At that time he threatened to quit, but was talked out of doing so. Later he became angered by the way in which a senior-scientist position had been filled, and he expressed his opinions freely. He was furious over his initial placement and even went so far as to apply the term liar to at least one man with whom he had talked prior to being hired. There was a lengthy and heated argument with his boss over the matter of personal research time. He complained on numerous occasions to managers at high levels in the research and development department and to people in personnel about a variety of things that troubled him. He was often bitter and sarcastic. His contentiousness was particularly evident in connection with the continuing battle over the appropriate grade and pay scale for his job.

As a result of this aggressiveness, many of Jim's superiors considered him lacking in tact and uncooperative. It was said that he had a personality problem, that he was unable or unwilling to understand the views of others, and that he did not know how to accept criticism. He was irritating to other people, and as a result they did not want to work with him. He was sarcastic, demanding, and unnecessarily aggressive. In short, he was considered a troublemaker and an agitator who had a disruptive influence on the work of others in the department. Furthermore, there were many who believed him disloyal because of his tendency to speak favorably of procedures employed in other firms and to use them as examples when arguing for programs which he supported. His frequent derogatory comments regarding the accomplishments and approaches of his own company led to the conclusion that he was antagonistic to its goals and a poor security risk.

There seem to have been no particular difficulties in connection with Jim's personal motivation or in the physical area. His anger was aroused by the frustration of strong motives, but these appear to have had their origins in cultural rather than individual causes. Except for this value problem, which will be taken up in greater detail shortly, there is no indication that motivation was strategic. Jim's efforts were instrumental to the final completion of the development project. He worked hard, was making good progress in his research, and had received several merit increases. Similarly, physical factors are not in evidence. The failure is not of a kind which suggests causation of this type.

Practically nothing is known about Jim's family, so that it is impossible to make a definite statement in this area. Nevertheless, all the problems which arose can be adequately explained in terms of other known factors. Although family events could have contributed to the frequent emotional outbursts, it is doubtful that they were a major cause. Group factors within the company appear to be absent, also. Jim's boss on the development project did refuse to give him the personal research time he had been promised, thus provoking an angry reaction, but this decision was not really made at the group level. Pressure from higher management was primarily responsible. Forces outside the immediate group were also involved in the other episodes. In general, it was some action taken or not taken by higher-level management or by people in the personnel area that caused Jim to become angry, not the behavior of a fellow group member. There was apparently some conflict with several of the engineers on the development project, but this does not appear to be strategic. Jim's greatest problems were not with people at his own level in the department. Also, at the time he was formally defined as ineffective by the appraisal panel, he was working on research and apparently getting along quite well with the other chemists.

From the discussion so far, it is evident that the company had a major role in Jim's failure. There were at least three strategic factors in the organizational area. Most striking was the lack of action on the part of the company in areas where action was clearly intended. In this instance the failure was not an inevitable consequence of an investment decision. It happened because there was little relationship between planning and the subsequent course of events. The plans unfortunately formed the basis for promises made at the time Jim was hired. When these promises were not carried out, he became angry, and it was this anger in turn which led to the judgment of ineffectiveness.

These failures of organizational action occurred in a number of areas. The company had indicated an intention to fill its senior-scientist positions with top people, the kind of people Jim might wish to work under. But for whatever reason, this was not done. Also, Jim was to work on basic studies in the area of his dissertation. But he spent his first eighteen months with the company in an engineering capacity doing development work. The research which had originally been thought so urgent was put off for almost two years. Jim was promised from 10 to 20 percent of his time to work on his own research. Finally after a long delay, he got one day a month for this purpose. It had been understood that his job would be graded appropriately and his pay established accordingly. Yet on two occasions he had been forced to push for a restudy of his job, and in both cases it was finally concluded that the existing grade was too low.

Again and again there was a disparity between plans and actual implementation. The trouble may have been at the original planning level, in the interpretation of plans by the personnel department unit responsible for recruiting, or in the area of implementation. In any event, Jim was not treated as he had been led to believe he would be, and without a closer relationship between company plans and action, people such as he may well fail to meet organizational standards. Other individuals might have accepted the lack of company action without becoming disturbed, but men like Jim are incapable of doing this.

It was at this point that the second organizational factor came into play. Anger was clearly present, but was it sufficient to define the young chemist as ineffective? In all probability it was not. There is every reason to believe that inappropriate criteria were employed. The appraisal panel considered Jim uncooperative, as no doubt he was, but there is little evidence that this resulted in a negative impact insofar as the work of others was concerned. In fact, it seems possible that his contentiousness may have stimulated some to more effective performance. Certainly this was true of the job analysts, and it may have been true on the development project.

The appraisal panel also indicated that Jim was disloyal to the company. The threat to organizational security was felt to be so great that he could not be allowed to continue in the research department. He might take important secrets to a competing firm. Yet there was no real basis for this conclusion. Jim did not sell his company out and apparently had no intention of doing so. He only wanted to stimulate others to act to meet competition. Had he wished to do otherwise, he would have joined another firm after his demotion rather than accept a university appointment. The overall picture suggests that James Wicks was considered ineffective because he angered many of those in a position to judge him. The personal wishes of these people subsequently became confused with organizational objectives and he was defined as an unsatisfactory employee. In actuality, he had a personality which was unsatisfactory to certain crucial people. Thus, an inappropriate performance criterion, which was instrumental to the judgment of failure, was employed.

The third organizational factor has already been mentioned in connection with the inadequacies of company action. There was a placement error, not in the sense that the man could not do the work, but because the assignment provoked some of the anger which subsequently led to the conclusion regarding ineffectiveness. For eighteen months Jim worked at a job for which he was not hired and which would not have induced him to join the company. Had he been aware that this was to be his fate, he would never have come with the firm in the first place. This was not perhaps the most crucial of the planning failures. Probably alone it would not have been sufficient to produce the final outcome, but it did contribute.

At the time he accepted a position with the company, Jim indicated clearly that sincerity, honesty, and equity were very important to him. Throughout his period of employment, evidence of the consistency with which these cultural values had been inculcated appeared again and again. It was when they were violated that he became angry, and unfortunately they were violated rather frequently. Before he was hired a number of promises were made regarding placement, research time, working relationships, job grading, etc. But in a great many of these instances the promises were not kept. To Jim this was grossly unfair. Many of us would almost certainly agree. In addition, although this does not emerge quite as clearly, there was apparently some feeling that a violation of the cultural value placed on freedom occurred when Jim was repeatedly denied an opportunity to do the kind of work he wanted to do. This too would have contributed to the emotional outbursts. When strongly held values are blocked and frustrated in this way, many people find it virtually impossible not to express their anger. Also, since they are absolutely convinced that they are right, there is little reason for them to hold their emotions in check.

There are, then, three types of strategic factors, since it was not the situation but the actions taken by the company which set off Jim's anger. These organizational failures, in interaction with the young man's values, produced the emotional outbursts which in turn led to inappropriate conclusions regarding the effectiveness of his performance. These conclusions were reached at the company rather than the work-group level, since representatives of the personnel department and of the upper levels of research management were involved.

For some time efforts to bring about change were concentrated in the emotional area. Jim was subjected to a good deal of pressure calculated to put an end to his outbursts. He was told again and again that he was uncooperative. As might have been anticipated, this accomplished little. When anger derives from frustration of cultural values, as in this instance, it is unlikely to be controlled by social pressure. The man believes he has a right to be mad and can find many who will agree with him in this conclusion. Similarly, there would seem to be little likelihood of changing the underlying values themselves. Jim did not adjust his beliefs during a period of over two and a half years with the research and development department; the chances of his doing so later seem slight. He had too much reason to believe that he was right and the company wrong.

This leaves correction largely up to the company. There was little Jim's immediate superior could do himself. There had to be some change at the level of top department management and on the part of the personnel people involved. An individual manager can occasionally, by saying the right things at the right time in the right places, exert some influence. In this case, however, once the special appraisal panel had been established, the matter was no longer in any sense the responsibility of immediate supervision.

Ideally, of course, the company would have moved as rapidly as possible to correct the inequities perpetrated after hiring, and where this was impossible Jim would have been given a detailed explanation of why nothing could be done. In particular, adequate personal research time should have been provided, and every effort should have been made to ensure that he actually worked on the type of project he had been hired to carry out originally. This might not have eliminated his contentiousness but should have reduced it considerably.

Even more important to a complete solution, some change in the criteria used to judge Jim's performance should have been introduced. Those intimately involved would have had to learn to endure his outbursts, at least to a much greater extent than they did. Certainly the demotion and transfer to quality control work accomplished nothing except to rid the company of a very competent and valuable employee. The best solution would have been to leave the young scientist in his research job while recognizing that unpleasant situations would continue to arise occasionally. These episodes would seem a small enough price to pay for the contribution a man such as Jim can make to a company's objectives.

Case 7

TRUCK DRIVER:

BLAIR BISCHEL

Blair Bischel was a rather unusual truck driver. The company had for years made it a policy to assign all new college graduates to some relatively low-level job for a year or more in order to get the young men used to taking orders as well as giving them. This policy had in recent years made it increasingly difficult to recruit top-flight people into the business, but no one had ever seriously suggested a change. Practically every one of the company officers had started out in a similar manner. The president had spent his first year working in a warehouse. There was a firm belief throughout the organization that everyone should be given an initial opportunity to get his hands dirty. It provided a true test of character. Blair as a new employee was no exception.

His job required him to drive a truck containing merchandise purchased by customers out to the suburbs and to other locations in the city. Some of the items to be delivered were small and presented no particular problem, but others were heavy and awkward. The work was frequently dirty and hot. Even with a helper it was difficult to get a heavy appliance up a flight of stairs into an apartment. And customers were not likely to be pleased when an item arrived late or was damaged in some way. Then there were the frustrations of trying to meet a delivery schedule while threading through city traffic. The supervisor in charge of deliveries had apparently developed very little understanding during his years as a truck driver; he became quite unpleasant when faced with "necessary" delays. The job did in fact provide a test of character, especially for a young man eager to attain the upper reaches of the managerial hierarchy.

Ever since the first day, the supervisor had been uncertain whether Blair would meet that test. The young man was obviously ambitious, but ambition did not necessarily provide the key to success in this particular organization. He had been brought up in the city and had compiled an outstanding record both as a scholar and as an athlete in the schools there. His father could not afford to send him to college on his salary as a janitor, but this had not been an obstacle. Blair had had several offers of scholarship aid and finally chose a small but well-regarded private liberal arts college. His father urged him to attend the state university, and there had been considerable dissension in the family over the matter. Nevertheless, things had worked out well and the young man had graduated with honors, in addition to making a name for himself as a track star.

After that had come two years as an officer in the Air Force and then his present job. No one was exactly sure why he had selected this particular place to start his career, although the store's name was well known throughout that part of the country. The supervisor suspected that Mrs. Bischel had influenced his decision. She was a local girl and apparently had not enjoyed the enforced separation from home necessitated by her husband's tour of duty in the armed forces. Blair's taking this job at least provided some insurance against further separation.

Actually Mrs. Bischel represented something of an enigma to the supervisor. He knew relatively little about her, although they had met and Blair spoke of her often. It was generally understood that she came from a socially prominent family in one of the suburban communities and that she was among the top women golfers in the area. She worked as a reporter for one of the city newspapers and had sold several stories to national magazines. There was much discussion about this, and the general consensus was that she probably earned more than her husband. During the years when they were living at various Air Force installations she had devoted most of her time to writing, and this activity was presumably now beginning to pay off.

During his first six months on the job, Blair had no difficulty at all. He worked hard and got along well with fellow employees and customers alike. He seemed to accept the necessity of starting at the bottom and working up. In fact the idea apparently appealed to him. The supervisor was amazed at his cooperativeness, having expected more of a "prima-donna" attitude. Blair rarely objected to the hot, sticky work during the first summer, even though two other young men who had come with the company at the same time quit. When necessary he worked extra hours without complaint.

Unfortunately, just as it began to look as if the company had a first-class employee with a really bright future, things began to change. There was no set period during which the new college graduates had to remain in blue-collar jobs. It depended on the individual and the number of higher-level positions that opened up. Blair, however, seemed to tire of the work unusually rapidly. It was not long before he was making inquiries about possible opportunities for advancement. Shortly after that the complaints began to come in. One customer called about the fresh young driver who had refused to take an item for exchange because he was "no salesclerk." Another was upset about a company truck which she had seen speeding past her house on several occasions when the children were out playing. Several people reported items left at the door with no apparent attempt to determine if anyone was home to receive them. There was one instance where a driver had apparently used some four-letter words while bringing a heavy crate in from his truck. On another occasion a male customer had called and used some four-letter words himself in describing an employee who had refused to take a damaged item back to the store. In every instance investigation revealed that Blair was responsible.

When the supervisor tried to discuss these episodes he met an unanticipated reaction. Blair did not attempt to deny these things. But he rather sullenly refused to accept the view that they were important. He indicated that the customers were largely chronic complainers and bossy busybodies with nothing to do but make trouble for people who amounted to a lot more than they did. It took about three of these "discussions" before the supervisor was able to carry the conversation much beyond that point. Blair might be a sensitive young man who took offense very easily, but knowing that fact did not make him any easier to deal with.

Actually, the complaints tapered off after a while, although they never completely disappeared for any period of time. Then one day a new problem emerged. One of the other drivers pointed out to Blair that he had been consistently avoiding deliveries in a certain suburban area by arranging things so that all such jobs fell to others. The area was not only rather far from the city, but it contained an unusually large number of customers who purchased heavy, bulky items. Blair denied the charge heatedly, but a check of the delivery schedules suggested it was true. In fact, it looked very much as if the young man had gone to considerable trouble to avoid this suburb. When the supervisor then sent him into the area specifically, the helper who was with him said that Blair would not get out of the truck unless both men were needed to unload something, and that he did so then only after considerable argument. The supervisor never could figure out exactly what the trouble was. He learned from another driver, however, that Mrs. Bischel's parents lived in the area and had for many years. Questioning Blair was, as usual, fruitless, although he did mention the fact that his coveralls were dirty.

During the succeeding months Blair's name was frequently mentioned as promotional opportunities developed, but he was not offered a chance to move up. The personnel department was strongly opposed on the grounds that he had not proved himself competent as a truck driver. If he could not handle people at that level and if he kept antagonizing customers, how could he be expected to perform effectively in more difficult and demanding jobs? The supervisor could not argue with this position, and in fact he did not try. The young man's mistakes in judgment were not serious enough to justify dismissal, but they were not the sort of thing one normally rewards by promotion either. If he had been hired to continue as a truck driver indefinitely, his performance might be considered barely satisfactory, but he had not exhibited the kind of emotional stability required for successful performance as a manager.

Actually, Blair's difficulties tended to come in bunches. There were periods of some duration with no customer complaints; then several would come within a short period. For a while he would be enthusiastic and perform well. Then rather suddenly he would turn quiet, and at such times people usually left him alone. The supervisor never could establish definitely what precipitated these periods of moodiness. They seemed always to follow closely on the promotion of another driver, but clearly this was not the only factor. One particularly bad time came after he had been ordered to deliver some items in the suburban community which he had been avoiding. On another occasion he came back from a brief vacation during deer season and would hardly speak to anyone for a week. It did come out, however, that his wife had been the only one in the party to bag a deer.

On the second anniversary of his employment by the company, Blair made a special effort to obtain a commitment from the personnel people as to when he might expect a promotion. He was told that no such commitment could be made. In addition, it was pointed out to him that there was at least one other young college graduate who had been with the company even longer than he and who had not yet been promoted out of his initial assignment. Actually, a decision had been reached that Blair would have to stay out of trouble for at least six months before promotion could even be considered.

Performance Analysis

Blair Bischel's difficulties do not appear to be of an intellectual nature. Since he graduated from college with honors, he must have had the mental ability his work required. His boss did refer to his behavior as occasionally reflecting poor judgment, but what he seemed to have had in mind was the young man's inability to control his emotions. Despite the terminology employed by the delivery foreman, the problems involved appear to be emotional rather than intellectual.

Anger and negativism did play a major role in Blair's failure. Again and again he had trouble with customers. He refused to take items for exchange, drove recklessly in neighborhood areas, left items at doors without making any attempt to deliver them personally, swore, refused to return damaged merchandise, and was often fresh or sullen in his dealings with customers. It seemed sometimes that he deliberately set out to do things just because he was not supposed to. Often these manifestations of defiance appear to have been intermixed with strong feelings of shame.

This comes out most clearly in connection with the deliveries to the remote suburban area. Without question Blair was avoiding this locale. Although trips into the area often involved hard physical work, there is no evidence that this was what troubled him. A more likely explanation is that he was ashamed of his job and did not want his wife's parents and their friends to see him performing it. Perhaps he had told everyone that he was in a management training program, but had failed to add that it involved a full-time assignment to delivery work. His reference to the dirty coveralls worn during his trip into the suburban area suggests concern about being seen under such circumstances.

These emotional reactions are of the kind which might be expected considering the nature of Blair's motivation. He was clearly very ambitious, very concerned with getting ahead and achieving status. Before his present employment, he had been successful in this respect. In high school he had done very well both in athletics and in his studies. He had earned a scholarship to college and had gone on to become a track star as well as a good student. Later he served as an officer in the Air Force. As a truck driver, however, he apparently found little that served to satisfy this type of motivation, at least after it became evident that he would have to continue at a low level for some time. In fact, what appears most strikingly is not pleasure in success at all, but a great deal of concern with problems of failure.

Blair appears to be constantly trying to avoid the shame which comes over him whenever he is made to feel unimportant. Always before, he had been able to accomplish this through appropriately integrated activity. But for him the delivery job was of low status no matter what he did. Thus, he alternated between unintegrated attempts at avoidance and outbursts of anger when his efforts were frustrated. He was ashamed of what he was doing, wanted to hide his low status from others, and made every effort to get out of what he considered a degrading position. He made repeated attempts to escape through promotion. He was ashamed to be seen at work by his wife's parents and their neighbors. He attempted to convey the impression that he was better than most people, including many of the company's customers, and thus to avoid recognizing his low status. When all these efforts failed, he became sullen, negative, and very angry. It would not be surprising if at such times he mused frequently on the utter stupidity revealed by his superiors when they forced him to waste his talents toadying to the whims of the idiots who were the firm's customers.

Although the job did make major demands of a physical nature, they do not appear to have been a source of difficulty. The work was menial and at a low level; this troubled Blair a great deal. But the physical part per se was no problem. He would have performed equally poorly in a similar job which did not require much strength—as an usher in a movie theater, for instance. Actually, as a former athlete, he appears to have been able to satisfy the physical requirements of the work very well. He was able to keep going even during the hottest weather and to assist in moving appliances whenever his services were needed.

At the family level there do appear to be additional sources of difficulty. In years past Blair and his father had had some disagreements, but these do not seem to have been a factor during the period of failure. Much more in evidence are the problems created by Mrs. Bischel. She was apparently a very competent young woman, accomplished in a number of masculine pursuits. She worked as a reporter on a local newspaper, wrote stories for national magazines, was a top-flight golfer, had been successful during hunting season, and probably made more money than her husband. In addition, she came from a socially prominent family, while Blair's father had been a janitor.

All this apparently contributed to the young husband's feeling of shame: He was not even good enough to outshine his wife. Almost everything she did outside their home must have made him feel inferior, and exposure to her family was apparently even more disturbing. These people amounted to something, while he was nothing. The fact that his wife was the only one to get a deer during hunting season must have been almost the last straw. In addition, it was presumably his wife who had induced Blair to return to the city after his Air Force service, and thus it was she who was responsible for his being in a job which caused him such intense distress. Much of the anger, resentment, and shame provoked by this family situation appears to have been carried over into the work environment.

Blair's relationships with his fellow workers and with his boss were not of the best, and it is possible that this may have contributed to his failure. On the other hand, there is much to indicate that these difficulties were more a result than a cause. He got into trouble with customers, and the conflicts with his supervisor ensued. Similarly, he attempted to avoid working in the area where his wife's parents lived, and then had trouble with other drivers because they felt he was not doing his share of the work. It seems probable, therefore, that the group was not a strategic factor.

The company made it a policy to assign all new college graduates to some low-level position and to keep them there until they proved capable of handling the work over an extended period. This policy guided the personnel people in their final decision not to promote Blair without at least six months of continuous trouble-free performance. It also contributed in no small way to his failure. If he could have been moved up within the first year, there probably would have been no difficulty. But as time went on he began to feel boxed, and his emotions took control. The disparity between the job and what the young man wanted was too great. As the delivery supervisor clearly recognized, the policy tended to select and train for management positions individuals who could withstand frustration and unpleasantness, rather than people who were ambitious. But Blair had a great deal of ambition; at least, he wanted status and a feeling of importance above almost anything else. A more inappropriate placement could not be imagined. Presumably he stayed only because he did not want to admit failure and because he hoped that somehow his investment of time and emotional distress could be made to pay off.

The remaining areas do not seem to be important. Blair's motivation was an individual matter; the culture was not a major factor. Also, the emotional reactions which led to so much difficulty were not situationally caused. Blair became angry and upset when events at home involving his wife and her parents made him feel inadequate. In the work environment these reactions were provoked by events that reminded him of his continued employment in a menial position and of his inability to obtain the promotion he desired so much. This was basically an organizational matter having to do with job placement.

The four strategic factors which have been identified do not appear to offer equal opportunities for change. The emotional problems are not of a kind which would suggest the presence of a real disorder. Even so, Blair might have benefited from psychotherapy. Unfortunately there was little likelihood that he could be induced to seek it. The need was not sufficiently strong. Without a shift in motivation or in the factors serving to frustrate his strong motives, there would seem little chance of achieving a reduction in the frequency and intensity of the emotional episodes.

Similarly, the motives involved in failure do not appear to be amenable to change. Blair wanted to achieve and wanted to avoid the shame that went with low status. This kind of motivation often has roots in events of a much earlier period and is maintained with great tenacity. In this case the young man clearly wanted to get away from the kind of environment in which he had been reared. Probably he was ashamed of his parents also. Furthermore, the motives which contributed to Blair's failure as a truck driver might well produce success in many other positions. It is difficult to change motives such as this, even if one wishes to do so; the man is too likely to be conscious of their potential value to him. Integration with the job was equally improbable. Blair could not attain the satisfactions he desired as long as he remained a truck driver.

Although a change in the family situation would not have solved the whole problem, it would have contributed to a solution. If Mrs. Bischel could have been induced to give up some of her outside activities and concentrate on her household duties, there is no question that her husband would have been much happier and his work would have benefited. There would seem little chance of talking her into this. A move out of the existing environment, however, would have accomplished much the same result. Separated from the opportunities her family position created for her in the city, she would almost certainly have had more difficulty getting employment and participating in hobbies outside her home. Furthermore, a transfer to some relatively distant location would have eliminated the close association with Mrs. Bischel's family which was causing Blair so much anguish. Such a change would seem to offer many advantages in reducing the shame and sense of inadequacy which his family situation had produced.

This would not, of course, solve the problems inherent in being merely a truck driver. It is important to note, however, that in the past when he had been able to achieve a feeling of status and importance, Blair had always done well. This suggests that a change in the level of employment, as well as in the locale, might help. It is always difficult to promote a man who is doing poorly into a higher-level position. It seems like rewarding him for failure. Yet there are people whose motives are organized in such a way as to make them respond favorably to the challenge of a job within the ranks of management. They do not view the promotion as a reward for ineffectiveness and an invitation to continue in the same vein. Rather, it is an opportunity to escape from hopeless distress and show what they can really do. Thus, Blair wanted to get ahead and was failing because he could not. It would seem sensible to give him what he wanted as a condition for success.

A promotion in this case would, of course, involve a reversal of, or at least an exception to, existing policy. Like so many rigid policies in the personnel placement area, this one appears to have done more harm than good. It not only contributed to Blair's failure, but also served to restrict the company's recruiting efforts so that a shortage of young men with management potential had developed. Like many such policies, it did offer some advantages. For example, it provided a good measure of one kind of character, although there is no certainty that this was the kind required for outstanding performance in all varieties of managerial work with the company. Perhaps more important, it provided essential training and opportunity to learn. But at the same time it apparently eliminated a great many men with abilities which were badly needed, because they simply were not willing to go through the period of lower-level employment and did not have to in other firms. If the policy was to be retained at all, it probably should have been supplemented with a specific time limit, perhaps six months or a year, and a guarantee that all those selected for management training would in fact be given a trial in a position at an appropriate level before being judged ineffective.

Case 8

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT:
GLENN SPICER

Glenn Spicer joined the market research department in late January. He was assigned to one of the study directors, who immediately put him to work on a calculator doing statistical work. Initially the computations required were not complex, and Glenn seemed to be doing a satisfactory job, although he was rather slow. After a while, however, the study director began to get concerned. Glenn continued to be slow—not only in doing the work once he got started, but also in comprehending what was expected of him. In fact, as often as not he forgot his instructions and just sat at the calculator or punched keys uncertainly until he was told again. He never would admit his memory failures, but he seemed very ashamed at such times and made all kinds of excuses, some rather far-fetched. This was obviously something more than a matter of learning a new job. Most new men had the calculators well under control inside of two weeks; Glenn was still in trouble after two months.

The study director began checking Glenn's work more closely. He found errors. He went back and checked his earlier work and found more errors. One study that had been sent in to the department director for final approval had to be pulled back and completely reworked. When criticized, Glenn became very upset, but there was no real improvement. On occasion he appeared almost panicky. This was particularly likely when he was being given a new assignment which he hadn't expected and which he was obviously having difficulty comprehending. Any kind of pressure to get a job done within a given time disturbed him. He worked hard and set high standards for himself. He tried to please, almost to the point of being obsequious, but he was clearly far from doing a satisfactory job. The marked discrepancy between his standards and his actual performance obviously troubled Glenn a great deal, in spite of his repeated efforts to hide his deficiencies and his constant refusal of help.

Because of his slowness and the difficulties his errors caused others, Glenn was not very popular among his fellow workers. He seemed to be continually irritating someone without really meaning to. As a result he was left pretty much to himself. He made little effort to alter this situation; in fact, he seemed to prefer being alone. He became very nervous when anyone approached him with something new or unusual which he hadn't had a chance to get set for and think about for a while. It was as if he wanted to have everything rigidly controlled and in a set routine. If other people insisted on upsetting the applecart and throwing things out of kilter, then it was best not to have too much to do with other people. His social isolation clearly provided a mutually satisfactory arrangement. It protected him from anxiety, and it protected his fellow workers from his slowness in reacting and his almost complete lack of emotional responsiveness, both of which were irritating to nearly everyone.

A check of personnel and medical records, as well as several discussions with Glenn, brought out the following facts. He had joined the company as a shipping clerk the previous June immediately after graduating from high school. His work had been considered generally satisfactory, although even in performing the routine tasks this job required, the quantity of work he turned out was not what it should have been. His conscientiousness more than compensated for this, however. The job put him under little time pressure and he seemed to enjoy it. During this period he had experienced some dizziness and had fainted at least twice. There was some reason to believe that these events might be associated with head injuries which he had received in an automobile accident.

During his senior year in high school Glenn had been badly injured in an accident which was ascribed to his father's carelessness in going through a red light. The other car had crashed into the door next to Glenn, and he had been removed from the wreckage unconscious. After a month in the hospital he was finally sent home, but with instructions from his doctor that he should not enter college after graduating from high school, as originally planned. The doctor was convinced that the concussion and head injuries which Glenn had experienced had resulted in permanent damage to his brain, and that the demands of college work would serve to exacerbate emotional difficulties which were already clearly evident.

The accident had apparently only increased the boy's already intense hatred of his father, a successful lawyer. He was obsessed with the idea that he must remain independent of the father at all costs. Money, advice, even offers of sympathy from his parent he rejected with the same coldness. Although living in the same house, the two practically never spoke. Above everything else Glenn wanted to be as successful and independent as his father, and perhaps a little more so.

It was this driving ambition which led him to seek the market research job. Completely ignoring the high educational criterion the company utilized in selecting people for management positions in the department, and ignoring his own limitations as well, he dreamed constantly of rising to fame as director of market research and eventually as vice-president of marketing. The personnel department had recommended him for the job in large part because, with a well-above-average level of general intelligence, he seemed suited for work in a research group. His numerical ability tested at the same relatively high level.

The final decision, after it became evident that Glenn could not be continued in his present position, was to return him to shipping. He accepted the demotion with practically no emotion. If anything, he seemed slightly relieved. There was some brief reference to entering college shortly and to the fact that he had saved some money so that his father's help would not be required. Other than that, he seemed untroubled by the fact that his career in marketing had been at least temporarily terminated.

Actually, the demotion did provide a rather successful solution to the problem of Glenn's ineffective performance. He received a merit increase after a year on the new job and was quite clearly performing the work in a satisfactory manner. In spite of occasional references to college, he continued to work as a shipping clerk. There was only a slight improvement in his emotional state, and his social isolation continued, but he was able to maintain a satisfactory level of occupational performance.

Performance Analysis

Despite his adequate verbal and numerical ability as reported by the personnel department, Glenn Spicer clearly possessed some intellectual deficiencies which affected his work. He was very slow in carrying out his duties and seemed to have some difficulty comprehending what was expected of him. There were frequent failures of memory, especially after he had been told to carry out some task that was new to him. Apparently many errors in calculation occurred because he completely forgot what he was supposed to do and then tried to go ahead without asking for help. To these disturbances of comprehension and memory were added some striking deficiencies in judgment. The apparent belief that, in spite of his educational and performance limitations, he could attain positions such as director of market research and vice-president of marketing is typical. The far-fetched stories he concocted to explain his memory difficulties and errors provide another example.

These intellectual problems appear to be intimately associated with others of an emotional nature. Glenn was extremely anxious and as a result tended to withdraw from social relationships. He became upset when faced with a new problem which he could not rapidly comprehend, when pressed to produce at a faster rate, when criticized, or when he could not remember things. Anything that made him in the least aware of his inadequacies seemed to panic him. He was constantly trying to hide his intellectual deficiencies from others, perhaps for fear that they might laugh at him. He seemed to have to control everything and to be entirely independent of others in order to prove he was not incompetent. Apparently he believed that if he could get things into a rigid routine so that nothing unexpected would arise, he could escape his fear. When this defense failed and new demands appeared suddenly, he was likely to feel overwhelmed. Unfortunately, this was a common occurrence in the market research job. Events of this kind must have contributed to Glenn's many errors and to his slow rate of output. It is difficult if not impossible to produce adequate work when one is flooded with fear. In this instance the disturbing emotion seemed to be sufficiently intense and the defenses sufficiently inflexible to constitute a true neurosis. Anxiety was the predominant emotion.

Motivational problems were apparently not strategic in a primary sense, although in one respect they do seem to be related to failure. Glenn's ambition led him to seek a job which was clearly over his head. Perhaps he half-suspected the extent of his limitations and desired the promotion in order to prove himself or to demonstrate that he was not as incompetent as others might think. In any event, his motivation was not realistic and contributed to his eventual ineffectiveness, in the sense that it led him to apply for a position which he was incapable of handling. Of course, the fact that he actually obtained the market research job is attributable to a placement error on the part of the personnel department. This, rather than motivation, appears to be the major factor accounting for Glenn's presence in such an inappropriate position.

The only physical factor in evidence is the rather strong indication of brain damage. The young man had been seriously injured in an automobile accident. The doctor who had treated him believed his brain had been damaged and that this, combined with the obvious emotional problems involved, made it inadvisable for him to attempt college-level work. Much of his behavior on the job is understandable in this context. Poor judgment, inability to remember, slowness of comprehension, lack of emotional reactivity, and attempts to hide intellectual deficiencies are all found frequently among people who have suffered a brain injury. Dizziness and fainting are also common aftermaths. In fact, convulsions are not unusual, although characteristically they develop only in cases which are more severe than Glenn's apparently was.

The only fact that might argue against the conclusion that his brain was damaged is Glenn's relatively high level of performance on the tests of general intelligence and numerical ability. This is not unusual, however, where the injury has occurred after the period of childhood learning. Much of the knowledge obtained previously weathers the injury and is retained. This is particularly apt to occur if the damage has not been severe.

Although Glenn's relationship with his father was far from close, this factor does not appear to have been strategic. The armed truce which existed between the two, although perhaps symptomatic of Glenn's neurosis, seems to have served effectively to neutralize any influence that home conditions might have exerted on performance. The son had what amounted to a compulsion to remain independent of his father. To obtain any kind of assistance from him would presumably have represented an admission of weakness and incompetence. As such it would have become a stimulus for feelings of anxiety. But the defense of complete rejection seems to have succeeded in keeping unpleasant emotions to a minimum, at least insofar as any direct effects of family relationships on work performance were concerned.

Glenn's relationships with his fellow workers were handled in much the same way. He was unpopular and as a result was ostracized, but contrary to what might have been expected, this did not have a negative effect on performance. In fact, the impact seems to have been generally positive. Glenn was apparently somewhat disturbed by the presence of other people because they might introduce problems and demands that he could not adequately handle. Also, they might make fun of him. The ostracism represented an ideal solution. Far from being strategic, it actually reduced his anxiety and thus increased the effectiveness of his work to some degree.

The fact of overplacement on both intellectual and emotional grounds has already been noted. Behind these, of course, was what amounted to an overplacement in a physical sense as well. The physician's judgment appears to have been vindicated. He advised against Glenn's attending college because he felt the young man would be unable to handle the work and would as a result become increasingly disturbed emotionally. This is, of course, exactly what happened in the market research position. Like college, it made demands which exceeded Glenn's capacities.

This largely completes the list of strategic factors. The society as a whole and situational forces were not instrumental to failure. Of the two, only the situational area seems to involve any question at all. Yet Glenn did not become emotionally upset when faced with particular physical aspects of his environment. It was the nature of the job demands established by the company which disturbed him. Thus, organizational rather than situational factors were the major determinants.

In the light of this analysis the action taken seems to have been correct, and subsequent events confirm the conclusion. The physical disorder could not be corrected. At least, medical science does not yet have an adequate solution for this type of condition. This means that the intellectual deficiencies will remain and continue to restrict Glenn's occupational attainments. Similarly, it would be very difficult to cure the emotional disorder. Perhaps psychotherapy might help, but this at best would eliminate only the factors of an emotional nature. It would not restore the ability to perform effectively in jobs such as the market research position. Furthermore, Glenn's extreme aversion to receiving assistance from anyone and his preoccupation with independence make it improbable that he would be willing to accept the kind of relationship with another person necessary for effective psychotherapy.

Actually, the demotion appears to have reduced the need for psychotherapy. It also, without question, even further reduced whatever motivation to seek such help may have existed previously. As a shipping clerk, Glenn faced fewer intellectual demands which were beyond his capacity and consequently he experienced much less anxiety. This contributed to his improved performance, but it also made it improbable that he would seek professional assistance with his emotional problem. Men such as Glenn usually enter psychotherapy only when they are so upset that they will try anything which might remove their fear.

In addition to the reduced intellectual demand, there is another factor which apparently contributed to the efficacy of demotion as a solution Glenn wanted a routine job which would minimize the number of new and unexpected factors he might have to deal with. He wanted to control his world so that there would be no surprises which might overwhelm him and provoke feelings of anxiety. The position as a shipping clerk made it much easier for him to utilize this type of defense. It is characteristic of work in a research group that novel situations arise frequently. In the lower-level job there is a much greater opportunity to maintain a routine and to impose a rigid control on the environment.

Case 9

TRAINING COORDINATOR:

ANTHONY CICCELLI

From his record there was every reason to believe that Anthony Ciccelli would be a competent training coordinator. He had come to the plant with very strong recommendations from the people at company headquarters and with a background of experience that seemed almost ideal. After college, where he had obtained a degree in education, he had taught school for three years. Then, shortly before his marriage, he had left teaching and enrolled in the M.B.A. program at a local university. Much of his graduate work was apparently completed at night, since he held several different jobs during this period. He had joined the company as a junior job analyst immediately after obtaining his degree.

It was generally known that the training director had had his eye on Tony as a possible addition to his group from the beginning. The job analysis work was, however, a good way of learning about the company, and it had been several years before Tony was actually transferred. For the past four years Tony had worked as a training assistant on the staff at company headquarters developing programs, arranging for the use of outside specialists, and occasionally doing some training himself. There had been some uncertainty, when the promotion to the job of training coordinator at the plant was offered, whether he would accept. Mrs. Ciccelli had been brought up in the city and in fact had never lived anywhere else. At several parties attended by company personnel, she had even expressed the view that there was nowhere else worth living. Her sentiments on this matter were so clear that a number of people were absolutely sure that Tony would never accept a position out of town. Nevertheless, contrary to expectations, he had agreed to take the plant job which would move him and his wife to a city over a thousand miles from their former home. The betting was that Mrs. Ciccelli must be pretty sore at her husband.

The personnel director at the plant, who was the new training coordinator's superior, found him a very pleasant young man who seemed to be as well informed about industrial training and education in general as anyone he had ever met. Since the industrial relations staff at the plant was not large, the two men worked closely together on a variety of problems and soon became good friends. Several new programs were initiated during the first six months, including a course in coaching for supervisors and a complete retraining project for the men who were to operate some new equipment. Tony was well liked by nearly everyone. He had a convincing way of getting people to go along with him with very few objections.

Yet the personnel director became increasingly worried about him as time went by. His work was good and he was proving just as competent as everyone had expected, but every now and then he would do something that did not make sense. And he seemed very unsure of himself and lethargic. Except for an occasional lackadaisical job on a report, things were customarily done well, but one would never have expected it from Tony's attitude. Every task was an insurmountable obstacle. The final product seemed to emerge out of chaos and disorganization so overwhelming that nothing could possibly be accomplished. Yet somehow the job got done, although Tony himself would have been the last to imply that anything other than pure luck could account for its completion. He was obviously not a happy young man.

In part, his problems were financial. The Ciccellis had decided to keep their house in the city where the company headquarters were located, and they were currently renting it. They had, however, also bought another house to live in, and very shortly they found that they could not meet the mortgage payments. Tony tried to borrow money from the company's emergency fund but was turned down. Subsequently he tried to sell the house in the other city, but he had permitted an option to buy to be written into the two-year lease. This option provided that the present tenants would have the first chance to acquire the property after the lease terminated, if the house were put up for sale. The tenants now said that they would be happy to buy, but only after the lease expired.

A second attempt to borrow money from the company proved successful, and a sizable loan was made from the emergency fund. There was, however, considerable discussion regarding Tony's business judgment. There were many who felt a company employee at his level should have sense enough not to get in such a mess. This negative feeling was considerably enhanced when it was learned that part of the loan money eventually went into the purchase of a new car. Furthermore, there were a number of stores in town which would not permit the Ciccellis to charge purchases because of large unpaid bills. Their telephone had been disconnected for some time because of difficulty over the payment of charges for long distance calls. Finally, in spite of the company loan they did lose the new house and had to move into a small apartment.

All this did not help Tony's reputation in the company. There were many who presumed, although lacking real knowledge, that he must exhibit a similar deficiency in judgment on the job. For a number of months the personnel director remained convinced that this was not the case and did his best to counteract the rumors, which persistently reappeared. There was a great deal of talk about Mrs. Ciccelli. The general feeling was that she was very bitter about having been forced to leave her home, friends, and family. She had not entertained anyone since their arrival, although the Ciccellis had been invited to the homes of a number of company people. On these occasions it was clear that husband and wife did not get along well. Tony spoke very little and appeared dejected. His wife frequently criticized him for forcing her to leave everything that was dear to her, and this criticism apparently had an impact. Tony did consider himself to blame for his wife's unhappiness. Anything she wanted him to do, he did—as if to atone for bringing her there. And Mrs. Ciccelli seemed to take an almost sadistic pleasure in forcing her husband to run errands for her, getting him to buy her presents, and otherwise reminding him of the debt he owed her. Some people said she also drank very heavily at home. The personnel director was never sure about the truth of this.

By the time a year had passed, some evidence that Tony's difficulties were affecting his work did develop. On several occasions, enough to make it a problem, other people at the plant had called his office during the afternoon only to learn that he had left for the day. A check with his secretary revealed that these absences always followed a call from his wife. In addition, he consistently refused to take any trips out of town on business. There was always something at the plant which required his attention. On the one occasion when he had gone, to attend a one-week management development program required of all training coordinators, he had had to return home after two days because of his wife's severe illness.

Although the personnel director hated to do it, he finally forced himself to call his friend in and bring up these problems. He pointed out that in general the training function was being handled well, but that there was a question as to how much the company could permit personal problems to take precedence over job requirements. Certainly things had not yet come to the point where drastic action was required, but the way things were going, that day might not be too far off. Tony, as expected, did not want to talk about his problems. He mentioned that he had thought of getting a divorce. Yet he could not bring himself to do that to his wife. He had forced her to leave her home and parents in order to advance his own selfish career objectives. It would be terribly unfair to leave her now. He did not know what to do. Things seemed rather hopeless. This thing had somehow gotten bigger than he was.

Several weeks later he called the personnel director and said he wanted to talk. It turned out that he wanted a transfer back to company headquarters. He would take anything that was available even if it meant a demotion. Perhaps there was something in job analysis. He realized this would hurt his career, but he had to do it. The personnel director promised to see what could be done. As it turned out, this proved to be very little. There was a strong feeling among the top people in the industrial relations department that a man should not let his personal life intrude upon his job. Anyone who was so weak that he would risk sacrificing his career because of family problems was obviously not the type who could be considered to have a future with the company. Tony would have to show his true colors. He was needed in his present job, not at headquarters. Any transfer for personal reasons was out of the question. The next move was up to him.

On hearing this news, Tony said he would have to talk things over with his wife. The next day he resigned.

Performance Analysis

Anthony Ciccelli failed in relation to one aspect of performance only. Although there may have been some decline in the quality and quantity of his work, this was not sufficient to warrant labeling him ineffective. In time, if things had continued as they were, true deficiencies might have developed in these areas, but this had not happened by the time he left the company. There were no problems insofar as the man's effects on the work of others and on company goals were concerned. The difficulty was almost entirely in relation to his absence from the job. He went home from work early, failed to attend conferences which would take him outside the city, and finally indicated that he could not continue in his present job at all.

These problems were almost certainly not caused by intellectual factors. Tony had a master's degree in business administration and extensive experience in the training field. He had a good background in education and had taught school. His qualifications seem to be almost ideal for this kind of work. The personnel director had, in fact, found him to be extremely well informed. There is some possibility of a problem in matters of personal judgment, in that some very poor financial decisions were made. This, however, had not yet become a source of failure on the job. The fact that a man needs an emergency loan from the company is not, in and of itself, sufficient to cause him to be considered ineffective. Actually, the deficiencies in judgment do not appear to be so much Tony's as his wife's. Difficulties arose largely because he permitted himself to be dominated by another person who apparently was not capable of exercising good sense. If the young man had been making his own decisions in the financial area, they undoubtedly would have been of much better quality.

There is evidence that Tony was experiencing a great deal of guilt and that he was frequently depressed. He was unsure of himself and lethargic. Although he always got the job done and usually did it well, he had no confidence and constantly expected to fail. "He obviously was not a very happy young man." He felt responsible for his wife's condition, believing that it was his own selfishness in insisting on accepting a promotion that had caused her so much suffering. The pattern of behavior suggests a person who is continually condemning himself for what he has done to another human being and who is willing to do anything to atone for his guilt. Unable to rid himself of this sense of personal blame, he became overwhelmed with the hopelessness of his situation. Probably Tony's state had not progressed to the point where he could be said to be suffering from an emotional disorder. Yet he was obviously upset much of the time.

The significance of this emotional factor is not so much that his emotions interfered directly with his work as that they made him extremely sensitive to any appeal or demand made by his wife. Any time Mrs. Ciccelli wanted him to do something, he felt he had to do it even if it might seriously disrupt his work. He apparently was unwilling to face the much greater guilt he knew he would experience should he ever say no to her again. He had done that once, when they moved out of the city to take this job. Thus, the emotional pattern established a readiness to react, which in combination with the demands of his wife led Tony to behave in ways that were detrimental to his performance. Although we cannot be sure, there is a good chance that this type of motivation operated in nearly all the cases where he appeared to show poor judgment.

Thus, it seems probable that they did not sell their house in the city because his wife wanted to keep it. Retaining the house would make their move seem less final. Unfortunately it also created some very difficult financial problems, especially when coupled with the purchase of a second house in the area to which they moved. Using the company loan to purchase a new car also sounds very much like one of Mrs. Ciccelli's decisions. The unpaid bills may well have reflected her tendency to indulge herself and to demand frequent gifts from her husband. Probably the telephone was disconnected because of an excessive number of long distance calls to the city in which they had previously lived. It is clear that Tony spent a great deal of time running errands for his wife and that he often left work in the middle of the day because she wanted him to. Probably his refusal to go on trips out of town represented a response to her protests. On the one occasion when he did go, developments at home made it necessary for him to return prematurely. At the end Tony asked to be transferred back to the city largely because of his wife; he presumably hoped to escape her constant accusations and reproaches. It may even be that she specifically urged him to act as he did. When that course failed, it was almost certainly she who decided he should quit. In his desperation he had little choice but to do as she wished. It was obvious that she had become very emotionally disturbed and that to continue would make matters even worse for her.

There can be little doubt that Mrs. Ciccelli was in fact ill. The move apparently disturbed her a great deal. Whether her problem was situational or represented a reaction to separation from her family cannot be determined with certainty. Tony apparently believed that separation from her parents was the crucial factor. The exact pattern of her neurosis is not entirely clear, but there can be no question about her intense desire to be loved. She wanted to receive gifts and to have her husband's constant attention. Again and again she must have told him that he could not really love her and still force her to live in a place like this. She condemned him often, presumably for his thoughtlessness and for his failure to demonstrate his love by doing what she wished him to. It is not uncommon in cases like this for the disturbed person to threaten suicide. There is also some possibility that Mrs. Ciccelli was on the way to becoming an alcoholic. Whatever the specific nature of the disorder, the seriousness of her condition, combined with her incessant demands, forced Tony to give his family problems a much higher priority than his job.

Although it is sometimes difficult to obtain enough information to eliminate any possibility of a placement error, the information was available in Tony Ciccelli's case. It was widely known that his wife wanted to stay in the city and that she had very strong feelings on the matter. Of course, no one knew that she would develop a neurosis as a result of a move, but there was every reason to believe that a great deal of discord would occur within the family. At least, there was enough known to make it clearly advisable to investigate the matter more fully before making a final decision regarding the assignment. The fact that this was not done contributed in no small way to Tony's failure.

The placement error was perpetuated at a later date by the company when Tony's request for a transfer back to the head office was turned down. At that point there was even more evidence available to indicate that because of the family factors involved, the assignment had been a mistake. This company action will be taken up in greater detail shortly in connection with the discussion of possible solutions. For the moment it is sufficient to note that the company did contribute to the failure.

Several other possible strategic factors should be mentioned briefly. Physical causes do not appear to be present. Tony was not ill, as far as we know, and his behavior was not compatible with such an explanation. Group factors are equally improbable. He was well liked and had the capacity to elicit support and cooperation from others which staff positions of this kind often require. The personnel director, far from contributing to failure, did everything he could to help. There were those who began to doubt Tony's competence eventually, after his financial problems became known, but these people did not cause his ineffectiveness.

In view of the fact that guilt is a predominant factor, some consideration must be given to the possibility that a conflict involving cultural values was present. Mrs. Ciccelli certainly tried to convince her husband that such a conflict existed. She made it clear that in her opinion he had been selfish and had deliberately caused her to suffer. By implication she indicated that in following the dictates of his work he had violated cultural precepts against selfishness and harming other human beings. Yet it is not generally considered bad to accept a promotion and to progress in one's chosen occupation, even if this requires some adjustment on the part of the family. It is, of course, wrong to deliberately make others suffer, but very few people would view the Ciccellis' move in that light. The wife seems to be interpreting cultural values in terms of her personal desires. This is rather common in neurosis. In order to gain her husband's love and constant attention she attempted to appeal to commonly held values and to make him behave out of a sense of guilt. But in order to accomplish this, she had to distort the values to a point where they are hardly recognizable as such. Unfortunately, Tony came to accept these distortions and to experience increasing amounts of guilt. This does not mean, however, that the real values of society were instrumental to his behavior.

Since there is no evidence of any kind of situational causation other than that inherent in family ties, we can now move to the possible types of corrective action. At the emotional and motivational level there seems little that could have been done without a concomitant change in at least one of the other factors. Tony was not disturbed enough to make psychotherapy a likely solution for him. His wife's need was obviously so much greater. Yet as long as the family problem continued, he would inevitably remain upset, and the behavior which contributed to failure would not disappear. In fact, the whole situation was well started on a downhill course, as Tony apparently recognized. Without some drastic action, things could only become worse.

There are a number of possible solutions at the family level. One possibility, as Tony himself mentioned, was divorce. Another was a long-term separation which would permit Mrs. Ciccelli to return to the city alone. This is the sort of thing in which no company can afford to become directly involved. The probability of severe repercussions is too high. If any interference should become common knowledge, a number of competent employees might well leave the firm on purely ethical grounds. Since a divorce or separation did not occur under its own power prior to the time employment was terminated, this possibility must be eliminated.

The next alternative is some type of effort to cure Mrs. Ciccelli's neurosis within the present locale. The personnel director was quite close to her husband. He was certainly in a position to suggest psychotherapy to him and to provide him with the names of competent practitioners in the area. Perhaps the company could have extended Tony's loan so that he would have been in a position to handle the expense involved. Presumably the house in the other city would have been sold eventually, and at that time an improvement in his financial position would occur. Having a psychologist or psychiatrist available to whom the wife could turn would have partially removed the burden from her husband's shoulders and would probably, in and of itself, have been sufficient to restore minimally effective performance. At least it would have kept him from quitting his job. As the wife's treatment progressed, a sizable improvement in the husband's emotional state could have been expected to occur as well.

Of course, there is always the possibility that this solution might not work. Mrs. Ciccelli might refuse treatment, or the treatment might prove unsuccessful. In that case, the only appropriate alternative would seem to be a transfer back to corporate headquarters—a lateral transfer, if at all possible. Action of this kind was considered and turned down. Although it is easy to appreciate the reasoning behind this decision, its appropriateness is open to question. Probably it was based to some degree on a desire to punish a man who seemed to be trying to take the placement prerogative out of the hands of higher management and force his own transfer. There was every reason to believe that if his wife's condition could be cured, Tony would be a very effective employee, and that a return to the city would bring about a sizable improvement in her condition. This would seem to be a sufficient argument for permitting the family to move back. It seems probable also that those who made the negative decision on his application were not entirely aware of the pressure he was under—of what it is like to live with a severely disturbed person and to feel helpless in the face of a developing catastrophe of this kind.

Case 10

WELDER:
FLOYD NELSON

The company hired Floyd Nelson as a night janitor at the research laboratories largely because it was difficult to find anyone else who was interested in the job. He had just returned home after several years in the Navy and was having trouble finding work. There was little demand for a young man who lacked a high school diploma. By the time he reached the company employment office he was willing to take almost anything. He admitted that he did not like the idea of night work and that his girl did not care for it either, but on the other hand he was attracted by the prospect of being associated with the laboratories. Working there was preferable to employment at a factory even though the pay might be somewhat less.

Actually, he remained in the janitorial position somewhat less than a year. An opening developed for a laboratory helper, and since Floyd was obviously interested, he was given a chance. No one was really sure whether he had done a good job with the janitorial staff or not, since the work at night was very loosely supervised. He had been absent more often than was generally acceptable, but in view of his youth this was not considered surprising. Presumably absenteeism would be less of a problem if he worked days.

As it turned out, this prognosis was correct. In fact he proved a very satisfactory employee in his new position. The job required him to take care of various items of laboratory equipment and to perform certain relatively menial chores for the scientists with whom he worked. He was considered something of a young screwball by these older men, but he was so obviously pleased with his job and himself that many of his antics were forgiven. Once in a while someone would have to crack down on him for attempting to do a job for which he lacked the technical training, but this was not common and he always took the criticism with good grace. In actual fact he did pick up a variety of technical skills by virtue of his constant association with the scientists. At the end of the first six months the group leader wrote a rather glowing report, noting that, "His performance has been excellent. He is competent and cooperative. He was quick to learn the various routines and different types of equipment and their uses. We are all very pleased with the way he has developed."

Reports such as this are not likely to go long unnoticed. Before the year was over the mail-room supervisor at the laboratories had put in a request that Floyd be transferred to his group. The job was only slightly higher in grade, but it did offer the possibility of further promotion through various clerical jobs in the research center. Unfortunately, although Floyd took the job, he did not stay in it. This created some consternation, but things finally were smoothed over. He apparently did not like the people he had to work with in the mail room and kept going back up to the lab whenever he had a break. And the breaks kept getting longer and longer. Finally the mail-room supervisor forbade him to leave the workroom except when given specific permission. The result was a considerable increase in output but also some very evident displeasure. After a month during which Floyd performed quite effectively, he apparently became thoroughly fed up with the situation and asked to be transferred back to his old job. He was told that his pay would have to be reduced, but that the request could be granted since his replacement had proved unsatisfactory. Floyd was overjoyed.

Back in the laboratory he performed effectively in every respect, and he clearly enjoyed his work. However, there was no possibility of his being promoted within the various research groups; he did not even have a high school education. Also, since the debacle involving the mail room, none of the supervisors of service groups at the research center would take him. Floyd remained in the laboratory working as a helper with the scientists for four years before another opportunity for promotion came his way, and even then he accepted the new position reluctantly.

The scientists with whom he worked were sorry to hear of his decision to leave. He had over the years collected a fantastic repertoire of jokes, some clean and some not so clean. Things would clearly be much more peaceful, perhaps even dull, around the lab after the young helper's departure.

The new job was not exactly what Floyd would have desired. He was to become a welder in the repair shop at the factory in town. He had picked up some knowledge of the work during his years at the research center and was to receive further training. It all sounded rather unpleasant. In fact for a while he had insisted he did not want the job. However, the personnel man kept pointing out that this would be the last opportunity for promotion, that there was no possible future for a man without technical training at the laboratories. And the increase in pay was appealing. Finally he gave in.

Almost from the beginning it was evident that Floyd was going to be a problem in the repair shop. He knew something about welding already, enough to get by; but he made no effort to learn more. When any of the men attempted to teach him, he usually ignored them. This response was not unique to the training situation. He rarely spoke to anyone, except the foreman, if he could possibly help it. At quitting time he went his way without a word, and he ate lunch alone. There were no more attempts to gain attention, and the jokes went untold. The foreman had seen "loners" before, but usually they were people whom, for one reason or another, the other men wanted to avoid. That was not the case in this instance. At first the men tried to be friendly; they were very interested in what went on at the research laboratories and asked Floyd many questions. However, he rejected these overtures, at times not even bothering to answer at all. Later this initial friendliness disappeared and there were many comments about the "stuck-up ex-janitor from the research center," but there were still a few men who would have liked to get to know him better.

All this would not have bothered the foreman too much were it not for the fact that the new welder was getting practically nothing done. A high percentage of the jobs initially assigned to him had to be reassigned later to someone else. The men did not care for this and on occasion made it very clear that he was expected to do his share. The foreman hoped that the others would eventually force Floyd into line in order to protect themselves from doing extra work. Several similar cases had worked out that way in the past. In the end, however, this hope was doomed to failure. No one could have been less impressed by the comments of the other men in the shop. As a result the foreman had to spend a considerable amount of time with Floyd trying to talk him into doing at least a bare minimum of work. This effort was not very successful either.

From these discussions the foreman gathered that a major source of the difficulty was Floyd's continuing doubt regarding the wisdom of the choice which had brought him to the repair shop. He clearly considered the work menial and unimportant. He had no great respect for the kind of people who devoted their lives to this type of activity. At times he seemed to believe that if he had stayed at the research center, he might eventually have moved up and become a scientist himself. At other times he seemed to recognize his limitations more clearly, but even then he gave the impression that his transfer to factory work should have been at a much higher level. Again and again he mentioned the low level of the work performed in the shop. The foreman tried to convince him that the only way to rectify this situation was by applying himself on his present job in order to qualify as a candidate for promotion into some more interesting kind of work. Floyd continued, however, to complain about the situation in which he found himself and to do very little work. One would almost gather that he had been forced to take the welding job.

At the end of the first year the foreman had to admit to himself that the new welder was unsatisfactory in nearly every respect and that there was apparently very little that could be done about it. One possibility was to fire him, but even the mention of that might well stir up trouble with the union. Things had been rather touchy ever since a layoff several months before. Anyway, the supervisor was not one to threaten his men. He believed in "live and let live." A transfer back to the research center might be arranged, but it would be hard to accomplish so long after the initial change. Perhaps if Floyd had requested a demotion or if something had been done within the first six months, the whole problem would have solved itself. But now it looked as if the company and the foreman would have to put up with an unfortunate situation. Maybe things would work out eventually.

Performance Analysis

Floyd Nelson's job as a welder was at the third level in terms of demand for verbal ability. In spite of his limited education, it is almost certain that he met the requirement for this type of position and that he possessed other necessary special abilities as well. While at the laboratory he proved himself adept at picking up new knowledge on a great variety of subjects. He also had a good memory for humorous stories. A man could not learn as rapidly as this in one environment and still lack the ability to acquire a comparable set of skills in another. In addition, Floyd had actually obtained a rudimentary knowledge of welding before going to the factory. He learned very little more about the subject after leaving the laboratories, but this does not appear to be because he lacked the ability. He made practically no effort to acquire additional information, even though he was offered every opportunity.

The difficulties in the welding job do not seem to be related to emotional factors, either. There is no indication that excessive anger, fear, or depression interfered with performance. Again the problem seems to be that Floyd just did not want to work. Yet at the laboratories he had been a willing, perhaps even an enthusiastic, employee. The difference appears to be that in the research setting he was continually exposed to an environment and to associations with other people which made him feel important. He gained a feeling of pleasure from being a part of a laboratory, where really significant things were being done, and from working alongside the scientists. At the factory this desire for status, if only by association, was frustrated. The people were not important in his eyes; the environment was dirty and unprepossessing; the work was the sort of thing anyone could do. Faced with a situation in which he saw no possible way of satisfying a dominant motive, Floyd gave up.

Actually, problems of a motivational nature first began to appear when he was transferred briefly to the mail room. At that time he indicated a clear preference for work which would put him in frequent contact with the scientists. He presumably enjoyed being with people whom he considered really important and rejected the group in the mail room because he could not find a similar type of satisfaction there. In fact, this pattern runs through his career with the company. At the time of his original employment Floyd disclosed his distaste for factory work and stated that he would much rather work at the laboratories in spite of the somewhat lower pay. When he moved to the repair shop, he did so with very little enthusiasm. Once there he showed no interest in welding and completed very few of the jobs assigned to him, in spite of continuing pressure from his fellow employees. He viewed the work as menial and had little respect for those who were content to perform it. He complained frequently and made it quite clear that he considered his original decision to take the job a mistake.

Although as a welder Floyd would be required to possess a certain amount of dexterity and muscular coordination, there is no reason to believe that this was a source of failure. As a laboratory helper, he must have needed similar skills, and there he performed very effectively. No other physical factors would seem to offer a possible explanation for what happened. Similarly, family factors do not appear to be of a kind that might explain the situation, although we know very little about the home environment.

The work group was, of course, a strategic influence. There was a lack of cohesion, at least insofar as Floyd's personal relationship to his fellow workers in the repair shop was concerned, which contributed in no small way to his failure. He needed very much to feel that he was part of a high-status group, to consider himself accepted by people whom he could look up to. The nature of the factory group made it impossible for him to attain this kind of feeling. As a result he rejected the others, presumably believing that to get really close to them would be somehow degrading.

It is interesting to note that during his employment at the laboratories he was extremely responsive to pressure from other people. He took criticism with good grace and was considered very cooperative. This characteristic had not been quite as evident in the mail room, and in the repair shop it was entirely lacking. The men made every effort to induce him to do his share of the work, but without any success whatsoever. Here cohesive pressures were totally devoid of any impact, apparently because Floyd did not wish to consider himself part of the group.

It seems probable that the repair shop foreman also contributed his share to the failure, or at least to the perpetuation of it. In his dealings with Floyd he never really accepted the managerial role, nor did he establish adequate performance standards. The attempts to get the group to impose pressures for increased productivity are consistent with this interpretation. Later, when this approach had clearly failed, the foreman devoted his efforts to trying to persuade his young welder to do the work assigned to him. These efforts at cajolery also failed. They were never supplemented by any attempt to exert real pressure. The foreman was not the kind of person who went around threatening his men. Discipline was not his forte.

In the end the foreman merely gave up all efforts to find a solution and became resigned to the situation, hoping that "things would work out eventually." Although such a failure to act may be appropriate on some few occasions, as where certain organizational policies are involved, this is rarely the case when motivation is strategic. Certainly what happened at the time of his relatively brief employment in the mail room would suggest that pressure might have worked with Floyd. If the foreman could have conveyed the impression that continued failure to do assigned work would in fact produce some unpleasant consequences, there is a real possibility that an improvement in performance would have occurred.

At the organizational level there was a problem in the placement area. Motivational, group, and situational factors all operated to make the welding job an incorrect assignment. Although Floyd was not actually forced to accept work at the factory, as he sometimes implied, he was exposed to a considerable amount of pressure. He tried to turn the position down but was finally induced to accept. This hesitancy in and of itself should have been sufficient to suggest the possibility of future motivational difficulties. At least it should have called for an extended discussion of why the promotion appeared undesirable. In addition, there was the episode in the mail room to serve as a guide. Under somewhat similar circumstances he had previously failed to exhibit appropriate motivation, and it had finally been necessary to return him to his original job. In the present instance, however, the work group and the physical setting were even further removed from what would have been required for satisfactory performance.

As just indicated, Floyd's difficulties at the factory were not restricted to the people with whom he worked. The physical factory environment was also strategic. The very fact that he had to work in such a place apparently served as a constant reminder of the extent to which his strongest motives had been frustrated. Perhaps if he had been employed in the factory office, things would have been better, but the repair shop certainly did not strike him as a high-status situation.

To complete the analysis it should be noted that cultural factors were not involved. Motivation of the kind Floyd evinced is an entirely individual matter. Also, there can be no question that the young welder was a failure by any standards. Cultural values did not introduce inappropriate criteria.

As has been mentioned, increased pressure and the enforcement of work standards would appear an obvious solution to the motivational difficulties in this case. As the mail-room supervisor found out, this approach could yield results. Presumably Floyd did fear failure, and if he had been led to believe that continued unsatisfactory performance would result in demotion, disciplinary action, or even firing, he might have exerted much more effort on the job. A probationary period might have been helpful. In view of the foreman's feelings about discipline and firing, it seems possible that he exaggerated the chances of militant union action in connection with this particular case. Floyd's popularity was waning rapidly and he lacked the support which membership in a cohesive group can provide. In fact, he had rejected the pressures of his associates when they attempted to influence him to do his share. Many probably would have been very happy to see him get what he deserved. These are not the conditions which normally induce a union to take up a grievance as a major cause.

It is possible that a transfer within the factory might have been necessary to obtain this kind of pressure. The repair shop foreman does not appear to be the kind of person who could carry out the necessary actions in an effective manner. It should have been possible, however, to locate an appropriate supervisor somewhere in the factory and to find a job in which welding skills could be utilized. Whether or not the repair shop foreman should have been replaced depends, of course, on his performance in other respects.

There is always a possibility that Floyd might respond to pressure in some way other than through work effort. He might continue to do nothing, in which case firing could be the only course remaining. A more likely prospect is that the situation would eventually become intolerable for him. He would make every effort to escape, either by leaving the company or more probably by requesting a transfer to a job such as the one at the laboratories.

Actually there is no reason why Floyd could not have been restored to effective performance by an appropriate change of work group and environment. If his desire for status by association could have been satisfied once again, he should have had no trouble. This would have meant a transfer back to the laboratories or to some other similar situation. It would also probably have meant a demotion. Ideally, of course, all this would have been done shortly after he had proved ineffective as a welder, within the first six months or so. If objective standards had been clearly established at the outset, he might have requested a demotion back to the laboratories after a few months, or he might have started to work effectively at the factory on the basis of a different kind of motivation than any he had manifested previously. Alternatively, he might have terminated his employment with the company voluntarily. All these would have represented more desirable solutions than what actually occurred.

Case 11

SALES MANAGER:

WAYNE TINDALL

The most important thing in Wayne Tindall's early life was basketball. He was a star in high school and went on to a small college which was known outside the state primarily for its ability to develop top-ranking teams in this sport. There he did well enough to attract the attention of one of the professional clubs, and after graduation and a brief period of military service, he received an offer which was sufficiently attractive to start him on a career in pro basketball. Although never a really outstanding player, he managed to hold on for a number of years and in the process made a comfortable living. In fact he was well into his thirties before he began to think seriously about what life might be like after his playing days were over. He and his wife had operated a fishing camp during the summer months ever since their college days, and both had always assumed, almost without thinking, that this would be their vocation after basketball ceased to provide an income. When, however, it came to the point where he could expect to play for only one or two more seasons at best, the need for somewhat more realistic planning forced Wayne to the conclusion that the fishing camp was no long-term solution. It had never been a particularly profitable venture and there was little likelihood that it ever would be.

His thinking had progressed about this far when he got into a conversation with a businessman who was staying at the camp. This man urged him to try selling, pointing out that it was a field which required no special previous training. By the time they got through talking, Wayne had agreed to get in touch with the man at the end of the next season and to apply for a job with his company. The man was sure there would be a sales position available—and as it turned out, he was right.

It was company practice to break new men in by having them work under very close supervision at first. Then, as they learned, it was expected that they would require less and less direction until finally they could handle a territory almost entirely on their own. Something like three years was characteristically required before a man was considered competent to work under minimal supervision. Wayne almost from the beginning was expected to complete his training in record time—perhaps as little as two years. He was older than many of the others and had a background of experience as an athlete. This kind of background was widely respected in the company. Furthermore, he gave every indication of being a topnotch salesman. He learned quickly, worked hard, and people liked him. He was one of those individuals who never see anything but the best in others and act accordingly. After a ten-minute conversation, people usually considered him a close and loyal friend. The progress reports sent in by his supervisor contained many glowing statements and emphasized his skill in handling people. There were several notations that he appeared to have considerable potential for supervisory work.

Largely because of these reports, Wayne had a very brief career as a salesman. Eight months after he started, he was pulled off the job and sent back to the home office to work in the advertising department. In part, this decision was based on a wish to provide him with a broader background of experience than was possible in sales work alone. The company tried to give men who showed some promise of rising into the ranks of management as much opportunity to gain diverse training as possible. But it was also true that the advertising department badly needed another man. Had that not been the case, Wayne would have remained in selling for a much longer period of time.

To an ex-basketball player who liked to spend his vacations out in the woods hunting and fishing, the world of advertising was something less than appealing. He stayed with it only because his job represented a road back to sales work, which he had enjoyed very much during his limited period of exposure. As it turned out, it was a rather long road. He spent over three years in the advertising department, devoting most of the time to seemingly interminable discussions with agency people. When he left, however, it was with a promotion and a solid record of accomplishment behind him. He was generally considered to have an unusually promising future in the company, although he himself had never indicated agreement with this opinion, nor did he appear terribly interested in achieving managerial success.

The new job placed him in charge of marketing a special line of products, which the company sold through a completely separate sales force assigned only to this work. The country as a whole was divided into two segments. Wayne was sales manager for the Western area. It was a big jump for a man with no supervisory, and very little sales, experience. Management recognized this, but there was widespread confidence in the ex-basketball player. He would do all right.

It was impossible to evaluate Wayne's work adequately until about a year had passed. The sales figures are the crucial measure, and it takes a while for the impact of a new manager to show up in the figures. When sufficient time had passed for his leadership to be felt, however, the results, at least as indicated by the sales criterion, were not as good as had been expected. In fact, the Western area had slipped behind the Eastern in terms of percentage gain for the first time in many years.

The trouble seemed to be partly in his handling of salesmen. Whenever a man got in any trouble for whatever reason, Wayne was there to defend him. At times he came to the defense of his men unnecessarily, so eager was he to appear as their representative rather than their master. He would on occasion go to fantastic lengths to do a favor for one of the salesmen or to help out when one was in a jam. As might have been expected under these circumstances, he rarely pushed a man for more work or offered any criticism. Often when he knew that something had to be done, he would do it himself rather than ask someone else to do the job. There were innumerable times when he made special trips hundreds of miles out of his way to see complaining customers. Normally the salesman in the territory would have been notified of the complaint and told to handle it and see that there were no more of the same. Although they liked and respected Wayne for his honesty and sincerity, many of the salesmen, especially the green ones, obviously had some feeling that they should be receiving more constructive coaching which might help them to see what mistakes they had made and how they could improve. Their sales manager seemed to find it so hard to talk about the work at all that no one really knew where he stood.

This same reticence was not apparent in his dealings with people at higher levels. He usually checked on any proposed action that was not strictly routine, to get assurance from his supervisors that it was within policy. On such occasions he frequently revealed a surprising failure to understand the situation facing him. He would raise a number of questions which indicated either that he lacked information regarding sales procedures or that he had not taken the time to think his problem through. It was hard to tell which. In any event, he was obviously not considering many factors which he should have taken into account in making his decisions. There were at least two occasions when he revealed that he did not know policy regarding acceptable charges on a salesman's expense account. In another instance he allowed a territory to remain unserviced for an excessive period of time because of a misunderstanding regarding company policy in this respect. The list could be extended almost indefinitely.

In addition, Wayne had not yet been able to organize his work well enough so that he could plan against future eventualities. He moved from one crisis to another trying to do a great amount of work normally handled by the salesmen, trying to follow orders and policy to the letter, trying to keep up with his own work load. It was a difficult existence. At times there was some hope that he might break through and get on top of the situation. In recent months, however, this hope had become rather dim. Yet he maintained his air of outward calm, of sincerity and friendliness. He was without question trying to do the best job he could.

When these problems were discussed with him, Wayne exhibited the almost excessive deference which always characterized his relations with his superiors. He agreed entirely with the criticisms. He should set higher standards for his men and follow up to see that his orders were carried out. He should think things through before seeking help at higher levels. He should devote more thought to organizing his own work and should let the salesmen do theirs. He should exhibit greater confidence in himself. One could not help feeling, although the man agreed with every comment made, that there was little likelihood of his behavior actually changing very much. If only he could argue a point, could give some indication that he cared about proving himself right. Without a strong wish to show that he could do the job and win out over adversity, he was not likely to change.

Time proved this prognosis to be correct. After three years the Western area had definitely established its inferiority to the Eastern. Sales were down and the sales force was disorganized and inadequately trained. Wayne had not changed at all, in spite of repeated efforts to help him. There was no alternative but to put him back in a sales position, a move which represented a sizable demotion. He appeared somewhat bitter when told of the change, but agreed it was the only thing to do. He should have done a better job as a sales manager. He should have forced himself to follow the advice of his superiors more closely.

Performance Analysis

Wayne Tindall was not sufficiently well informed regarding his company's sales programs and policies to perform his job in an entirely satisfactory manner. Among other things he lacked knowledge of policies dealing with expense accounts and staffing procedures, areas in which, as a sales manager, he could hardly afford to make many mistakes. Although some of his difficulties in the intellectual sphere appear to reflect poor judgment, probably due to the intrusion of emotional reactions when he attempted to think through certain types of problems, he clearly did not possess sufficient job knowledge. This deficiency does not account for all aspects of his failure, but it was a major factor.

It is always possible in such instances that the man may lack the mental competence required to learn the many aspects of his job in a reasonable period of time. Verbal or other special abilities may be insufficient. Wayne, however, was a college graduate, and he had manifested a capacity to learn very rapidly while in his original assignment as a salesman. His work in the advertising job had been entirely satisfactory. Although the intellectual demands of the sales-manager position were probably greater than anything he had faced before, it still seems almost certain that factors other than intelligence were largely responsible for his lack of knowledge.

The most likely explanation is that he did not have sufficient training. Normally salesmen in the company were expected to work under close supervision for approximately three years before being considered fully qualified. Wayne took over major managerial responsibility after only eight months. The position in advertising could not have taught him much that he would need out in the field, and unfortunately it removed him from the selling end of the business for three very important years. Opportunities to learn what he should have known as a sales manager were without question severely restricted by the nature of his previous placements.

The deficiencies in judgment may have been nothing more than additional instances of inadequate information. More probably, they may have reflected the impact of emotion on thinking. In any event there is considerable evidence indicating that emotional factors were strategic. Although before his promotion Wayne had been a relatively cool and collected person, this pattern disappeared, except as a surface façade, once he moved into the managerial position. Outwardly he remained the same calm, friendly person. But a closer look indicates that a drastic change in fact occurred. Eventually he reached a point where he could not bring himself to discuss the work at all with his subordinates; the situation was too disturbing to him. As a result, new salesmen received very little individual coaching with respect to their performance, and the men did not really know whether they were doing satisfactory work or not. The constant checking with higher management almost certainly reflects a desire for reassurance against a pervasive fear of error. Anxiety is also evident in Wayne's attempts to do his own work and most of his subordinates' work as well.

But the most striking indication of emotional factors is the tendency to blame himself for everything that went wrong. The discussions with his superiors were full of self-condemnation. Everything was his fault. He could not seem to do anything to correct the many problem situations, but he did not question any of the judgments that were made regarding him and his performance. If anything, he embellished upon the criticisms of others. The picture suggests a man overcome with guilt, a man who at times evidently wanted to fail in the performance of his job in order to escape an intolerable situation.

It is this guilt which seems to be behind much of Wayne's behavior as a sales manager. Although there must have been times when his emotion overwhelmed him, and thus made effective performance impossible, the more typical pattern appears to involve a continuing effort to escape from these disturbing experiences, an effort which was not integrated with job demands. This was his basic motive in the work situation. At times it almost appears to have been his only motive. His tendency to rise to the defense of his men even when such a reaction was totally unwarranted is understandable in this context. He seemed to view himself continually as one of the salesmen rather than as their manager. Apparently, by escaping into the role of a subordinate he hoped to avoid the guilt that the managerial role provoked. In fact, he seemed to be constantly afraid that the salesmen would condemn him as a manager. He did almost nothing that he thought might anger them. He would not criticize or reprimand. He continually did things himself, rather than tell his subordinates to do them. This tendency to take over and perform the work himself in order to avoid giving orders was most pronounced when the task was unpleasant or difficult. The result was that much of Wayne's own managerial work was left undone. The tasks taken over from the salesmen were not effectively performed either; a man cannot do everything himself.

Toward the end this wish to escape the experience of guilt and anxiety appears to have evolved to the point where Wayne really wanted to fail and be removed from the job. This type of negative motivation usually operates at the unconscious level, since the individual would not want to view himself as a quitter or as too weak to withstand a little anxiety. Yet the desire to get out of a situation which is terribly disturbing takes precedence over nearly everything else. It is not as bad to fail on the job as it is to continue in it, especially if the person is completely unaware that a wish to fail is instrumental in his ineffective performance. Although it is not certain from the evidence available that Wayne's behavior was guided by this kind of motivation, there is every reason to believe that it was. On the surface he appeared to be trying to do a good job, yet he did not approach his work in a way that would seem to offer much chance of success. In spite of continual advice and guidance from those at higher levels, he maintained the same pattern of behavior inflexibly throughout the three years. He agreed with all criticisms, but he did nothing about them and gave the impression that he never would.

Physical, family, and group factors do not seem to be strategic. Wayne had been an athlete for many years and was presumably in good physical condition. There is no indication that he had any family problems. Throughout his career with the company he had been very popular; everyone seemed to like him. In fact, it was this ability to get along with others that originally led to his being suggested as a supervisor. Eventually some of his men became somewhat disenchanted with him because of his failure to provide adequate guidance. This, however, was a result of other factors and did not serve as a cause of failure.

The company seems to have contributed in two ways, both of which have already been touched on briefly. For one thing, Wayne was promoted without adequate training. Although existing plans and policies called for approximately three years of instruction followed by several years of independent work as a salesman before a man moved up to managerial responsibility, Wayne had only eight months of directly relevant experience. Other factors operated to deprive him of an adequate opportunity to learn what he needed to know. He was older than most beginning salesmen, he had been a professional athlete, and his initial performance on the job was very impressive. These circumstances contributed to the company's conclusion that an exception to the usual policies regarding training should be made in his case. Presumably, the shortage of personnel in advertising was also influential. In any event, he did not get the training a manager was normally expected to have and which he needed to perform effectively.

There was a placement error in addition to this. Although adequate preparation would presumably have eliminated Wayne's intellectual difficulties, the emotional and motivational problems would have remained. The fact that a person makes friends easily and appears to get along well with nearly everyone provides no basis for concluding that he will necessarily prove successful as a manager. The jump from the advertising position to that of area sales manager was a sizable one. It appears that factors such as Wayne's popularity and his experience as a basketball player contributed in no small way to the decision to make the move. Unfortunately, a much more important predictor of future performance was overlooked: Wayne never did give any indication that he was really interested in achieving success as a manager.

The major stimulus which set off his guilt seems to have been the managerial situation. In fact the pattern of behavior suggests very strongly a subjective fear reaction similar to those discussed in Chapter 11. Wayne was not obsessed with guilt until he became a manager, and it was only then that he became ineffective. Previously he had been outstanding in nonsupervisory work. It is difficult to say exactly what the unacceptable impulses aroused by the managerial situation may have been. Presumably such factors as a desire to exercise power, pleasure in feeling superior, and a wish to show off figured strongly in his motivational hierarchy, although, of course, at an unconscious level. Strongly held cultural values would then have led him to believe that egotism and a sense of superiority of this kind were bad and worthy of severe punishment. Unfortunately we do not have the kind of information that would permit an exact reconstruction of the processes involved, but the fact of guilt and its impact on performance are clearly evident.

This analysis provides a rather long list of strategic factors; intellectual, emotional, motivational, organizational, cultural, and situational determinants were all involved. The intellectual aspect could presumably have been rectified by more extended training. It would appear, however, that Wayne could not learn as long as he continued to face the emotional pressures of his managerial job. There were too many other problems constantly demanding attention to permit him to stop and acquire the knowledge he needed. This means that it would have been necessary to relieve him of managerial responsibilities for a period of time, perhaps a year, so that he could devote his efforts entirely to making up for past deficiencies in training.

Such an approach would, however, have supplied only a partial solution. The personality problems associated with emotional, motivational, and cultural factors and stimulated by the managerial situation would still remain. These alone would have been sufficient to guarantee continued failure. Since something had to be done immediately, in view of the continuing decline in sales throughout the Western area, a change in the situation seems to be the only short-term solution available. Wayne apparently wanted to escape from the environmental context which had provoked so much guilt and anxiety. A transfer to some type of work other than the managerial would seem to have provided the most appropriate method of satisfying his desires and thus solving the company's problem. It is unfortunate, in fact, that this move was delayed as long as it was. Not only was a great deal of business lost as a result of the three-year wait, but Wayne's successor was faced with the problem of revitalizing a poorly trained and sadly demoralized sales force. In addition, higher marketing management had to devote a tremendous amount of time to the problems existing in the Western area and to the personal difficulties of the area's manager.

The best long-term solution is probably also the one actually employed. Any change in Wayne's emotional patterns, motives, or values would have taken a long time, if it could have been accomplished at all. Yet the change had to be made immediately because of the declining product sales. Thus some type of transfer was imperative. But if this transfer resulted in an appropriate placement, and the demotion to a sales position would seem to provide such a solution, then all reasons and motives for personality change would probably disappear. Wayne's guilt would be reduced, his negative motivation minimized, and his performance improved. There would be no incentive for him to seek professional help or for his superior to attempt to change his behavior. This would presumably mean that he would spend much of his life in actual selling rather than in managing, but a topflight salesman can contribute much more to a company than a completely ineffective manager.

Case 12

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT:
HUGH GREER

Hugh Greer got into consulting work rather late in life after a long career as an accountant. The change in occupation was not something that he had planned in advance; it was one of those things that happen to a man. After college, where he had majored in business administration, he had gone to work for an accounting firm. He remained there for over twenty years. The firm was relatively large, and Hugh became acquainted with a variety of business problems. In particular he developed, under the urging of one of the partners, a considerable knowledge of cost accounting procedures. It was this knowledge that led him into the consulting field. The firm eventually established a separate management services division, and a number of the more experienced men were asked if they would like to shift from the traditional type of work to the job of counseling various firms on their accounting practices.

The new positions offered many attractions—a new and developing field, somewhat higher pay, the opportunity to deal with intriguing problems and to meet some of the leaders of American industry. Hugh's expert knowledge of cost accounting made him particularly attractive to the man in charge of developing this new group, and he was strongly urged to make the change. He protested at first that he knew nothing about the kind of work that would be involved, but on being assured that he would get all the help he needed while learning and that there would always be an experienced man to assist in case of difficulty, he decided to accept the position.

Within a year he was approached by one of the major management consulting firms and after several talks received a very attractive offer.

A long-time friend had recommended him. At first he demurred, pointing out that it was only in the last month or so that his present job had developed to the point where he had to be out of town for any period. Prior to that he had never in his whole life done any consulting or even been called upon to work away from home for more than a day or so at a time. Certainly he was unproved as a traveling man and his consulting experience was very limited. He felt that he did not possess the kind of background the job required. The friend who had recommended him was very insistent, however, and so were the people from the consulting firm. They emphasized that he would be working, in most instances, as part of a team under the direction of a senior man. What was important was his knowledge of accounting and business conditions in general, not the degree to which he had traveled or his experience in identical work. Mrs. Greer agreed; she could see little point in turning down an opportunity to increase their income by such a sizable amount. Hugh capitulated rather quickly and accepted the job.

For the first six months or so things went well. Hugh was away from home a great deal, since it was general policy to give the newer men the majority of the assignments requiring traveling. This did produce an occasional complaint. Other than that, however, he appeared entirely satisfied. His performance was completely satisfactory although he was till in the process of learning certain aspects of the work. Actually the complaints about traveling were not very vehement. The consulting teams usually returned to the city on weekends, and that made it much easier. Nevertheless, he did worry about leaving his wife at home alone. Several times he mentioned to the man in charge of his group that he now had a little more appreciation of what people had gone through during the war. Not having had to serve in the Army himself, he had not realized how disturbing it could be for the members of a family to have to live apart for long periods of time.

During the latter part of the year these complaints became somewhat more frequent, although Hugh never asked to be sent home from an assignment or made any attempt to avoid working outside the city. It was evident, however, that he hated to be away from his wife. He often mentioned how hard it was for her. At about the same time he also began to have some trouble with the work. Several times in checking over a company's reports he failed to note information which subsequently proved important in developing the consulting team's recommendations. So far the results had not been too serious, since someone else had caught the errors, but there was always a question as to how much had gone undetected. Obviously Hugh was not pulling his weight. The men in charge of the jobs on which he worked were instructed to spend more time with him, partly to help him learn and partly to protect the firm against his mistakes.

The extent to which these instructions were actually followed varied considerably. The groups were specially constituted to deal with the problems of a given client company. As a result Hugh found himself working under a variety of supervisors, the specific man depending on the nature of the job to be done. Some worked very closely with him, telling him exactly what had to be done and helping him as best they could. Under this kind of supervision he usually performed in a satisfactory manner—at least, the mistakes made were minimal. Other men, either because of the demands of the work or because of their own temperaments, were less precise in their specification of the job to be done and provided less assistance in other respects. The result was usually some inaccuracy or inadequacy in the accounting information provided to the rest of the team.

Irrespective of the supervisory approach, however, it was generally agreed that Hugh was extremely touchy. He would fly off the handle over things that seemed too minor to bother anyone. He was particularly difficult about accepting criticism. If he thought a remark implied any inadequacy on his part, he immediately became defensive. Some of his alibis were totally unconvincing. Usually he adopted the policy that "the best defense is a good offense" and launched into an attack on his presumed critic. Although the men in charge of the various groups came to expect this behavior whenever they found it necessary to criticize the accountant's work, it was very disconcerting to fellow workers and clients to find themselves censured in a response to what they had intended as a totally innocent remark. Luckily, Hugh was somewhat less likely to blow up in this manner when a representative of a client firm was present.

As time went on, however, the irritability and the errors became an increasing problem. Frequently men would ask not to be sent out with Hugh, to the point where it was hard to put together a group if he was to be included. The men were afraid that he would make some unprovoked remark of a critical or sarcastic nature to a company man and thus turn the whole job into a fiasco. This had in fact happened on one occasion when he had been placed in charge of a three-man group sent out to introduce a cost accounting system in a medium-sized company. The company had practically thrown the group out bodily after Hugh reacted to an imagined slight by commenting at great length on the "prehistoric" features of the accounting methods then in use. After that he was never again put in charge of a job.

Finally things became so bad that he was called in by one of the senior men at the central office and told that if he did not change his ways in the next three months they would have to consider letting him go. After that the situation showed signs of improvement for a month or so, and Hugh even received a raise. Then it developed that in checking out a budget against actual expenditures, he had skipped a whole page and thus failed to note certain overexpenditures of which nearly everyone in the client company was aware. As a result the man in charge of the consulting job had made some rather silly statements and suggestions while talking to the company's officers. The criticism which resulted was not a product of Hugh's imagination. He tried to say that the company had not provided him with adequate information, but a check revealed that this was not the case. He then accused those present of fabricating a situation in order to cast him in an unfavorable light.

As a result of this episode he was again warned that if a considerable improvement did not occur in three months he would be discharged. He was shifted to another assignment and sent out under a different supervisor. At about this time Hugh apparently contacted his old accounting firm and asked for a job. The word that got back to the management consulting organization was that he had requested a position that would not require him to engage in management service activities. He wanted to get out of consulting because he felt the various men under whom he had to work, although they might be competent as consultants, characteristically provided totally inadequate supervision. In fact, they were impossible people to work for. There were a few of whom this was not true, but they were the exception rather than the rule. Within a month he rejoined the accounting firm.

Performance Analysis

Insofar as knowledge of accounting work was concerned, Hugh Greer had no difficulties. He was a good accountant with appropriate training and a strong background in costing procedures. Yet there were times when his judgment became rather poor, presumably as a result of the impact of emotional factors on his decision making. He frequently used various kinds of intellective defenses against anxiety, with the consequence that his thinking was not always very objective. He imagined many slights which were not intended. As a result there were a number of instances where conflicts arose between the consulting firm and its clients without there being any need for dissension at all. Sometimes clients were lost as a result. Hugh had a marked tendency to blame others for his own deficiencies, and in consulting work this kind of behavior almost inevitably contributes to reduced efficiency.

This propensity for distorting the true nature of a situation in accordance with his own wishes often made it possible for Hugh to express anger freely. Because of this, the company lost clients, and it became difficult to put together a group willing to go out with Hugh on a consulting job. "He would fly off the handle over things that seemed too minor to bother anyone." Criticism of any kind seemed to disturb him immensely. "If he thought a remark implied any inadequacy . . . he immediately became extremely defensive."

In addition to anger, anxiety was also strategic. Hugh was clearly upset about his separation from his family and worried about his wife. This became an increasing source of distress as time went by. It seems to be associated with the errors which began to emerge during the latter part of his first year on the job. Apparently anxiety kept forcing its way into his mind, making it impossible for him to concentrate on his work. He skipped over important items because he could not really pay attention to what he was doing. He was too upset.

As so often happens, the frustration of a strong motive appears to have been instrumental in provoking these emotional reactions. Hugh again and again indicated his desire for attention and help from others. He wanted someone to assist him in making decisions and to tell him what to do. When there was no one available to fulfill this need he became panicky and angry in turn. He was afraid of what might happen when he was forced to go ahead on his own in an independent manner, and he was angry over being deprived of the attention and help which he considered his due.

This kind of motivation emerged first when Hugh was offered the new position in the management services division of the accounting firm. At first he declined. But later, after being assured that he would be given all the help he needed while learning, and that experienced men would always be available to assist him, he accepted. When the job with the consulting firm was offered to him, he reacted in a similar manner. Initially he turned the position down because he felt he lacked the required knowledge and was not used to being on the road. But pressure and assurances of help changed his mind. He was told that there would always be a senior man available to help him and that he would work as part of a team rather than alone. Mrs. Greer wanted him to take the job. Her urging and that of his friend finally induced him to capitulate. Obviously he was not a man to make decisions independently of others.

The role of this desire for assistance in Hugh's ineffective performance as a consultant became particularly evident later, after those in charge of the various jobs on which he was employed were instructed to work more closely with him. When this was done and he received specific guidance, his performance was satisfactory. When his motives were blocked as a result of failure to get this kind of attention, errors began to appear. These problems became particularly acute on the one occasion when he was put in charge of a job and thus had no one to whom he could turn for help. As might be expected, Hugh's anger over being placed in such a frustrating position soon broke loose. He reacted violently to an imagined attack upon himself, and the client was irretrievably lost. His major criticism of the consulting firm when he left was that he had received inadequate supervision. Presumably this meant that there had been insufficient satisfaction of his intense desire to lean upon others.

In spite of the fact that Hugh did not serve in the war and thus may have had a physical disorder which led to his being classified 4F, there is no reason to believe that factors of this kind were associated with the intellectual, emotional, and motivational difficulties which have been noted. On the other hand, family and group determinants do appear to have played an important role in activating these individual factors. As already suggested, the separation from his wife was very upsetting to Hugh. Presumably she had helped him to make many of his decisions in the past, as she did the one which led to his joining the consulting firm. He had not experienced separation in wartime and had never been called upon to work away from home for any period before.

The anxiety provoked by even the thought of separation is evident in his initial reaction when approached about the possibility of his accepting work which would require extensive travel. Later, when separation had actually occurred, he reacted to the frustration of his desire for the assistance and attention of his wife in a much more drastic manner. He became quite anxious and his work suffered badly. It is important to note, however, that his fears were transferred to another person in such a way as to protect himself against any need to recognize his own extreme dependence. He was not worried about himself. But he talked frequently about "how hard it was for her" and the problems associated with "leaving his wife at home alone." This is not an uncommon type of defense in such cases.

Although Hugh's behavior eventually led to his being rejected by many of his coworkers, largely because working with him on a job was a risky business, this was not a cause of his failure. However, his relationships with his superiors were influential. Just as the separation from his wife frustrated his desires for her help and guidance, so the lack of a stable, close relationship with a supervisor made it difficult, if not impossible, to satisfy his motives within the work environment. The problems in this area appear to be of two kinds. One was the constantly shifting supervision. Hugh wanted to be sure that there was always someone he could rely on to help him if necessary. But with different men in charge, depending on the particular job, he never had a chance to develop a real feeling of security with anyone. Each new job presented a new source of anxiety because he could never be sure whether he could count on being helped or not. Secondly, there were long periods when he actually did not receive the kind of supervision he wanted. Some of the men he worked for paid little attention to him and made him work largely on his own, thus provoking both fear and anger. The frustration that his relationships with his various supervisors produced is clearly evident in Hugh's statement at the time of leaving. "They were impossible to work for."

The organizational contribution in this case was once again in the area of placement. The man was put in a situation where a strong motive would inevitably be frustrated. As a result, emotional reactions were precipitated which in turn interfered with intellectual processes. The situation was inappropriate in that it separated him from his wife and thus from an important source of satisfaction for his dependent motivation. It also deprived him of any possibility that he might experience the kind of stable, helping relationship with a superior that he required. Since these frustrations occurred entirely at the hands of important people in Hugh's environment, people who shared membership in the same groups with him, there is no reason to consider situational forces strategic. Similarly, his motives are of an individual nature. They do not derive from the society as a whole.

The ideal solution in this case would, of course, have been not to have hired Hugh for work on the road in the first place. Yet prediction of his failure would not have been easy without more information about his motives and emotional patterns than the consulting firm possessed. The fact that he had never worked away from home complicated the problem of prediction considerably. In any event, he was hired for this type of work, and the immediate problem is to determine what action might eliminate the difficulties which subsequently developed.

Since the emotional and intellectual factors were a direct consequence of the motivational aspect, it would seem most appropriate to concentrate on methods of satisfying the frustrated motives. What could be done to design a job in such a way as to provide Hugh with the things he wanted? One obvious answer is to restore the previous relationship with his wife. He had been an extremely effective employee for many years under conditions which permitted him to go home at night and talk things over with Mrs. Greer. There is every reason to believe that he could be just as effective again if this condition were to be reestablished. Secondly, he wanted a single individual to whom he could report and who would be willing to give him guidance, reassurance, and attention as required; in other words, he wanted a friendly and very considerate manager. It is interesting to note that Hugh did not begin to fail until after he had spent six months on the road. During this initial period, he was learning the business and thus presumably received a good deal of attention. Also, later when he did happen to get a supervisor of the kind described, his performance improved. Things were at their worst when he himself was in charge of the work.

Whether or not these changes could be accomplished within the framework of the existing job requires information beyond that which we possess. Perhaps Mrs. Greer could have accompanied her husband on some of his trips, and perhaps he could have been assigned less work requiring him to be away overnight. Conceivably he could have been provided with the type of supervision he needed while he remained in a traveling position. The shifting-team approach to consulting employed by the firm would argue against this, however. The ideal solution would seem to be to transfer Hugh into a permanent position in the head office where his skills might be appropriately utilized. This, of course, might not be possible. Consulting firms do not possess the kind of latitude in making placements that large corporations do.

If all else failed, then—and only then—would it have been appropriate to let him return to the accounting firm. But it would seem that every possible alternative solution should have been fully investigated before this was permitted to happen. Accountants with the experience and knowledge that Hugh Greer possessed are not easily found. The consulting firm must have been well aware of this when it hired him originally, or the efforts to recruit him would not have been so intensive. Equally intense efforts should presumably have been made to keep him, and to place him in a position where he could employ his skills and knowledge to the fullest.

13

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

As the reader has without doubt surmised, there is inherent in the approach which we have been taking a philosophy of management that differs in several important respects from other currently popular positions. These differences should now be made explicit.

One widely held viewpoint places primary emphasis on the matter of employee motivation. Since coercive procedures, which rely heavily on negative sanctions and the anticipation of fear, have become less and less effective as instruments of managerial purpose, there has been an increasing concern with more positive methods of motivating employees. The tendency has been to stress group processes and to establish a work environment where pleasure and satisfaction might be more widely anticipated. Thus, the basic intent has been to develop procedures which might induce all employees, at all levels of effectiveness, to contribute more fully to organizational objectives. This is the essence of the human-relations movement. The assumption has been that more efficient methods of achieving company goals can best be found through a *social psychology* of industry. The group as a whole must be motivated through positive means to make a greater contribution.

A second type of managerial philosophy has tended to emphasize human characteristics and abilities rather than motivation, but has retained a concern with improving performance generally, irrespective of the existing level of effectiveness. Basically this is an *experimental psychology* of industry. It views human engineering and optimal design of the workplace as the ideal routes to increased efficiency. If management can construct a work milieu specifically adapted to the physical and intellectual nature of the human beings who will be asked to perform in it, then sizable increases in productivity can be expected. All workers will improve in effectiveness, just as with the social-psychological approach, but in this instance it is the nature of the physical working situation, rather than some aspect of the employees themselves, which is changed in order to achieve such a result.

It has been shown that both these viewpoints have relevance for management. Both can contribute to increased efficiency of manpower utilization. If they are to be criticized at all, it must be primarily on the ground that their proponents have occasionally tended to underestimate the potentialities of other managerial philosophies.

Certainly there is nothing in this book to suggest that efforts along the lines proposed by these social and experimental psychologies should be abandoned and all energies devoted instead to the procedures described here. Nevertheless, our approach, which might be designated a *clinical psychology* of industry, does take a very different tack. For one thing, the concern is specifically with those employees who need to improve their performance most. The emphasis is on producing a major improvement in the work done by a relatively small group of people, rather than on bringing about a much smaller change in the achievements of a very large number. In addition, this clinical approach does not restrict itself to one type of factor such as the motivational or situational. It deals with *any* factor which might contribute to unsatisfactory performance.

Since these various management philosophies are in no sense mutually exclusive, there is little to be gained by arguing about their relative merits. Actually, we do not know which approach can at present produce the largest increase in productivity, nor do we know which offers the greatest potential for future advances in managerial technique. However, the sum derived from the three will inevitably be much greater than that obtained from any one alone. The ideal approach is unquestionably to use as many proved and nonoverlapping methods of increasing output as possible.

The important point with reference to the philosophy underlying this book is that in most companies a great many ineffective performers are retained without any action being taken long after their difficulties first become evident. Nothing is done to bring about a change in the affected dimensions of performance, largely because no one seems to know just what to do. Although perhaps in past years such individuals were characteristically fired as soon as they dropped below established standards, this is not the case today. Some, of course, are separated rather quickly, and others are dismissed after varying periods of continued failure, but there are many who remain indefinitely with only a minimum contribution to the firm. Again and again employees who have been considered unsatisfactory for years are noted as "not recommended for rehire" on their termination reports when they finally do leave the company; yet nothing was done about them during their long period of ineffectiveness. If a company were to devote a major effort to solving this problem, there is little doubt that a great increase in productivity would result. And at the same time considerable managerial time would become free—time which could be devoted to the implementation of other managerial philosophies.

Much of this final chapter will be dedicated to a discussion of the various considerations that must be taken into account in mounting such an attack on ineffective performance. Before dealing with this topic, however, we will devote a brief section to the extent of performance failure and to the relative incidence of the various types of strategic factors.

The Prevalence of Ineffective Performance and of Its Causes

The first question to be considered is the incidence of ineffective performance itself, irrespective of cause. How widespread is failure of this kind? Data that might provide an answer are very limited, a fact which is not entirely without its positive aspects. Any overall statistics are bound to be misleading insofar as specific companies and work groups are concerned. From the discussion of potential strategic factors in the preceding chapters, it should be clear that there are a great many conditions operating to determine whether unsatisfactory performance will be prevalent or rare in a given situation. The incidence can run from practically nil to well over 50 percent of a group.

Actually, the only information available regarding the overall frequency of performance failure was obtained in connection with a national survey of a cross section of the employed males in the United States. The men were asked to evaluate their own level of competence (39). Although data of this kind cannot be considered definitive in any sense, since self-estimates of job effectiveness need not coincide with managerial estimates, they are of some interest.

The men were asked to describe their jobs and then respond to the question, "How good would you say you are at doing this kind of work?" The interviewers offered four alternatives from which the respondent was to pick one: very good, a little better than average, just average, not very good. The last two (just average and not very good) appeared to indicate some recognition of inadequacy on the job, and therefore the two responses were combined for purposes of analysis. This procedure may well have resulted in an overestimate of the incidence of true performance failure, since many responding with "just average" may be reflecting a satisfactory work record. On the other hand, in answering questions such as this, people tend to exaggerate their own competence somewhat. Thus, many of the "just average" responses may really mean "not very good." Probably the figures derived from this study do represent something of an overestimate insofar as the true frequency of performance failure is concerned, but the exaggeration is not likely to be excessive. In fact, the figures for the higher-level occupations would appear to be very nearly correct, if we keep in mind that a man can be unsatisfactory in certain aspects of his work and need not be a total failure to be considered ineffective.

Among professionals and technicians, the percent indicating some sense of inadequacy was 13. This arose to 21 among managers and supervisors of all kinds, to 25 among clerical workers, and to 31 among sales workers. The figures for blue-collar employees show a similar rise with decreasing occupational level. Among the skilled the percentage was 29; among the semiskilled, 34; and among the unskilled, 38. Probably the figures for those occupations which generally carry less esteem are in part influenced by the respondents' evaluations of their jobs per se rather than of their performance in those jobs. An unknown number may be reflecting a feeling that merely to be working in the type of position they hold is prima-facie evidence of incompetence. This factor may well serve to inflate the percentages for lower-level occupations to some degree. It is interesting to note that only 8 percent of the college-educated men had serious doubts about their effectiveness, while the figures were 30 and 34 for the high school and grade school groups respectively. This finding is consistent with the previously stated conclusion that performance failure is least common at the upper levels of the organization. It is, of course, also most important when it does occur there.

If we turn now to the various types of strategic factors, the major source of available information is a previously unpublished study conducted by the writer under a research grant from the Western Management Science Institute. This study, which was carried out in 1961, was based on a rather small and restricted sample. The group numbered only forty. The conclusions which follow are derived from that study, supplemented by the writer's experience in working on problems related to ineffective performance over a period of almost fifteen years. Although more exact data are certainly desirable, these estimates should prove helpful. It appears improbable that the major trends and conclusions would be reversed by more extensive research.

The most frequent contributor to performance failure is unquestionably the company itself. In general, causation of this kind can be expected in some 80 to 90 percent of all cases. Almost invariably when the company is a factor, it is coupled with some other strategic cause, most commonly one classifiable as intellectual, emotional, or motivational, or else one associated with a work group. About three-quarters of these cases with organizational determinants seem to involve some type of personnel placement error. In work with people who have proved unsatisfactory, this factor appears with amazing frequency. Again and again one is faced with the question: How in the world did this individual get himself into this kind of job in the first place?

Emotional and motivational factors seem to occur with about equal frequency, in some 60 to 70 percent of all cases. Probably the incidence is so high because difficulties associated with the use of the available measurement procedures result in failure to attempt any real screening of applicants along emotional and motivational lines. Within the emotional category, the most prevalent cause is anxiety or fear. Although intense and disruptive experiences of this kind can, of course, occur quite independently of emotional disorder, it seems probable that the continuing reactions most frequently found in conjunction with performance failure will usually appear as part of a neurosis. When we consider how many people suffer from emotional disorders, the very large contribution made by conditions of this kind to ineffectiveness is not really surprising.

As part of the nationwide survey mentioned previously (39), respondents were asked if they had ever had a feeling of impending nervous breakdown—a term generally synonymous with emotional disorder. Although the use of such self-reports can be presumed to result in an underestimation of the true figures, the percentages are still amazingly high. About one-fifth of the adult population responded affirmatively to this question (12 percent of the males and 25 percent of the females). Similarly, approximately 16 percent reported very frequent experiences of anxiety and nervousness (10 percent of the males and 20 percent of the females). Presumably cultural proscriptions against fear, cowardice, and weakness kept many males from reporting their experiences with complete veracity.

It probably comes as no surprise to most managers that motivational problems also occur very frequently. There has, in fact, been some tendency to assume that nearly all performance failure is attributable to motivational deficiency. This has been, historically at least, particularly true among the military. Fortunately such views have not generally prevailed. If they had, a great many more intellectually and physically deficient individuals would be emotionally disturbed today. Nevertheless, motivational determinants do contribute to failure with much higher frequency than many other factors, although often in conjunction with them. Within the motivational sphere a large proportion of the cases—well over 50 percent—appears to involve some kind of blocking or frustration of a dominant personal motive (success, freedom from failure, dominance, attention, etc.) by forces within the job context.

The next most frequent major categories seem to be the groups at work and the various situational forces, each of which appears roughly 30 to 40 percent of the time. Among the different aspects of the group which can operate to cause failure, managerial actions of one kind or another appear to be the most common. The usual reaction to a manager whose behavior borders on the ineffective is motivational. Subordinates do not want to work hard for him, or they feel no particular need to do so. This, in addition to the fact that other group factors such as cohesion are closely allied with motivation, accounts for the frequently observed relationship between the two types of determinants. It has been the writer's experience that the presence of a group factor provides very good evidence for the supposition that motivation will also emerge. The probability of occurrence is of the same high order as that for some type of organizational factor (personnel placement in particular) when intellectual, emotional, motivational, or group factors are found.

Different situational forces tend to become strategic under differing conditions. These causes probably vary more among jobs than any other group of strategic factors. In the writer's experience subjective danger reactions have clearly predominated, but this may be merely because he has been consulted in connection with a disproportionately large number of cases involving management personnel. Where the work is unusually dangerous, or the contact with competing companies extremely close (as in sales work), other situational factors are much more likely to prevail.

Family ties and cultural values emerge relatively rarely, probably in 10 to 20 percent of all cases. This rather low rate appears to be attributable to self-selection. Presumably a number of people who might suffer from separation anxiety if exposed to the right conditions simply do not get involved in work which they believe will be emotionally disturbing. Nor do they have any desire to break family ties which have been a major source of satisfaction. Similarly, those who anticipate a possible conflict between the particular cultural values they hold and certain job demands are likely to make their occupational choices accordingly. They choose careers which are not inconsistent with their beliefs regarding right and wrong.

Two major areas have been deliberately excluded from this listing, primarily because the writer is uncertain whether generalization from his experience would be justified. Both intellectual and physical factors have appeared in less than 25 percent of the cases he has seen, but these figures have been obtained using data collected almost entirely in companies which employ psychological and physical examinations as part of their screening procedures. There is every reason to believe that the role of intellectual factors, especially of insufficient verbal ability, was held to a minimum by the use of general intelligence tests. These tests were used not only to select and place new employees but also to guide many subsequent transfer and promotion decisions. Without them the contribution of intellectual factors to performance failures would have been considerably greater; how much greater is impossible to say.

The estimate for physical factors is restricted even more by the conditions under which it was obtained. In companies which have fully staffed medical departments, cases of performance failure attributable to physical illness are not likely to come to the attention of psychologists or other personnel men who might normally handle ineffectives with other kinds of difficulties. If the man is physically sick, he is put in contact with a physician and the medical department assumes responsibility. Since the writer has worked primarily with companies which have medical departments and which give physical examinations prior to employment, he must have seen a considerably smaller sample of people in whom physical factors were strategic than would have been the case otherwise. All he can say is that where a medical department exists and physical examinations are used in selection and placement, the incidence of the remaining nonmedical physical problems should run no higher than 10 to 20 percent.

To take these estimates as a whole, it would appear that the average number of strategic factors operating in any one instance is roughly four. As previously indicated, the range can be from one, which is rare, to at least as high as eight. Of course there may sometimes be more than one strategic factor within a single major area. The writer has yet to see an instance in which all nine types of cause have actually contributed to a single failure. Although difficulties may be present in all areas, some of them have always proved to be unrelated to performance and thus not truly strategic.

Organization to Reduce Ineffective Performance

It is apparent that one way a company can reduce performance failure is through wise investment in the personnel selection and placement function. The company that hires qualified specialists with a knowledge of the available tools, that uses these people effectively rather than merely putting them on the payroll, and that conducts an adequate program of research into its own selection needs, can without question achieve a sizable reduction in the number of unsatisfactory employees.

The potential, and the need, associated with this kind of investment is dramatically illustrated by the figures quoted in the preceding section. At a very minimum, 60 percent of all performance failure appears to have some kind of personnel placement error as a contributory cause. In a great many companies the percentage can be presumed to run much higher than 60. Rates of this kind are not necessary. Currently available procedures and techniques in the hands of qualified practitioners, coupled with good development research, can easily bring about a substantial reduction in the number of people who fail because of incorrect placement decisions.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, however, screening and selection cannot provide a complete answer. There will be ineffectives even with sizable and sensible investment in the personnel functions related to placement. This means that a large part of the problem becomes the property of each manager. At this level the use of performance analyses and appropriate solutions can achieve a major reduction. Throughout this book there has been repeated mention of the various means a manager can employ, either personally or in conjunction with experts, to bring a subordinate up to a satisfactory level.

But performance failure, although basically a problem for the individual manager, is also an organizational problem. A man who fails in one part of the company may succeed in another part. The action taken by a single manager with regard to one ineffective subordinate can produce reverberations throughout the firm (and the union). Firing may represent a first-class solution from the viewpoint of the individual superior but a terrible waste insofar as the company is concerned. This raises a question as to whether the ideal effort aimed at reducing performance failure should not include a group or individual having as a primary responsibility the implementation of performance analyses in the company as a whole. The writer believes that such a group is highly desirable. It may, in fact, be absolutely necessary if maximal effort to keep the number of unsatisfactory employees at a low level is to be maintained over an extended period.

There are several reasons for this conclusion. Throughout the preceding chapters there have been occasional references to projective, intelligence, muscular-dexterity, and other types of tests which can prove extremely helpful in determining why failure has occurred. The majority of these require considerable specialized knowledge and training if they are to be used correctly. It is largely for this reason that the book has contained so little reference to them, since the major concern has been to convey the kind of information that most managers can use and to discuss techniques that they can employ themselves. However, these tests can certainly be of help. One of the great advantages of having a special performance analysis group is that the members would be qualified to provide testing assistance to individual managers. In this way greater accuracy in carrying out the diagnostic process can be assured. In some very difficult cases, an understanding of the strategic factors can be developed which might even be totally lacking otherwise. This is not to say that all cases require psychological testing. Many times it is clearly not necessary, but there are at least as many other times where benefits could be derived from the use of appropriate tests.

The approach to the use of psychological measurement and evaluation advocated here is, of course, quite different from what has been traditional in the personnel field. Tests have characteristically been developed and used for selection—that is, for predicting who will succeed and who will fail. Within clinical psychology, however, it has been common practice for years to employ tests not so much to predict as to gain a better understanding of ongoing processes. In essence, this is what is being recommended here: that tests be used to investigate the motives, abilities, skills, emotions, etc., which have contributed to a present failure. Such a procedure would appear to be at least as important an application of psychological testing in the business world, and in the occupational sphere generally, as the more traditional use in connection with selection. Perhaps in the long run it will prove much more important.

Besides providing specialized assistance in the area of testing, a group of the kind discussed could actually carry out complete performance analyses and report the results to the appropriate manager. This might be desirable where the manager had just taken over a new group containing several clearly ineffective subordinates. Under such conditions he would presumably be unfamiliar with the men, yet he might wish to act as quickly as possible. An experienced person with appropriate training and knowledge of information-gathering techniques could carry out the needed performance analyses in a few days. Personnel files, psychological testing, interviews, and discussions with superiors can provide a qualified specialist with a tremendous amount of data from which to develop plans for action. Performance analyses can also be carried out to assist managers who might wish to obtain a check on their own conclusions while they are in the process of learning the techniques described in this book.

As previously noted, there are some otherwise very effective managers who have considerable trouble understanding the reasons and experiences behind the actions of others. Confronted with cases like those described in the preceding chapter, especially the later ones, such people might be unable to come up with any clear cut idea of the strategic factors operating. Under such circumstances the services a performance analysis group can provide would appear to be almost essential. Similar assistance can be given to any manager who is faced with a particularly complex and difficult case. There are times when even a person with considerable experience and professional training can run into a long series of blind alleys. Certainly when the case is unusually difficult, it is helpful for a manager to have someone who has been devoting all his time to this sort of thing available for consultation.

Another fact which has led the writer to conclude that a special group is desirable is associated with the rapid rate of change and progress in the social sciences. It is important that some individual or group be responsible for keeping up with advances in related knowledge. In part, this involves new discoveries and theories bearing on performance analysis itself. Also, however, it involves improvements and innovations in the area of available solutions. The latter may currently be the more important of the two, since a major emphasis on the evaluation of alternative approaches to corrective action appears to be developing at the present time. A group of specialists in performance analysis has the advantage that it can take on the duty of keeping management as a whole informed regarding advances in knowledge which should be brought to its attention. New information can be passed on through special memos or through periodic meetings.

This raises a question regarding the role of managerial training in dealing with problems of ineffective performance. It is of course possible that merely reading a book such as this will prove entirely sufficient. From his experience in teaching the techniques of performance analysis to both practicing managers and business school students, the writer must register some doubt, however. There are people who grasp the techniques very rapidly and seem amazingly adept in applying what they have learned. They probably do not need any more training than they can obtain from books alone. But probably the majority want very much to discuss the material with someone. They feel strongly that, for them at least, real understanding is possible only when there has been a chance to ask questions, sometimes a great many questions, and to see the techniques applied to a case with which they are personally familiar. Training sessions and discussions, in addition to reading, can do a great deal to increase the individual supervisory skills of these managers. Some people appear to be more visually oriented; they learn best by reading. But probably the majority prefer to hear and to talk. It is among these latter people that the training offered by a performance analysis group has its greatest value. The presence of qualified specialists can therefore be an asset in giving managers who lack experience with the techniques the knowledge and assistance required to handle problems of performance failure adequately.

A final point deserves mention. A performance analysis group can conduct research in a number of areas having implications for the job performance of company employees. Possible new corrective procedures can be evaluated; specific jobs can be studied in terms of performance-relevant factors. It is doubtful that many studies of this kind will be conducted if no such group is in existence.

It is important to emphasize that the functions to be rendered by a performance analysis unit are not now being carried out by any single group on the typical company organization chart. Industrial psychologists are doing this type of work, but there is no one slot within the organization from which they ply their trade. Most are dealing with a great many other things in addition, and are forced to treat the handling of performance failures as a sideline.

Many of the related specialized areas of personnel administration are organized in terms of specific methods and techniques (training, job analysis, and management appraisal are examples) rather than problem areas. As a consequence it is difficult to fit an approach which may require the use of any one of a great many different techniques, depending on the circumstances, into the existing personnel or industrial relations department framework. To put performance analysis into any of the traditional groups would seriously distort their present functioning. Because of these considerations, as well as certain difficulties associated with reporting relationships which will be taken up shortly, it appears imperative that performance analyses be conducted by a separate group. Otherwise there is a real possibility that the performance analysis unit might have to operate with its wings so severely clipped that there would be no possibility of flight. Should such a restriction appear absolutely essential because of other considerations, it seems best that the investment not be made at all. There are already an excessive number of groups and individuals in the business world (and in the governmental as well) performing on what amounts to a token basis because certain crucial battles of an intracompany conflict were lost many years before.

Where a performance analysis group might best be placed in the organization depends on many factors which are unique to specific firms and groups of firms. It would be pointless to attempt a categorical answer here. The major consideration is that there be complete freedom to work closely with the immediate superior of any man who is failing. Because the problems involved are often of a very personal nature, and for other reasons as well, it is essential that the performance analyst be in a position to carry out his duties without being bound by many of the usual restrictions inherent in reporting relationships. He cannot communicate with the manager who has direct responsibility for the performance of the ineffective man through several levels of the company hierarchy; he must deal directly with the individual who has firsthand knowledge of the problem. To attempt to effect a performance analysis while working through a series of intermediaries is merely to invite misunderstanding and failure. This normally presents no particular problem insofar as first line managers, such as foremen and sales supervisors, are concerned. But it may raise some questions if, for instance, the ineffective man is a top vice-president and his immediate superior the president of the company.

There appear to be two possible ways of handling the situation. One approach is to attach the performance analysis group to the president's office, making the man in charge of the group directly accountable to the chief executive. From this position there should be no difficulty in working with managers at all levels. Another approach involves finding some spot for the group within a specific department, such as industrial relations, but specifying that wherever it may be located, special conditions regarding reporting relationships will be established. Actually, all that is needed is an understanding that performance analysts must be free to communicate with managers anywhere in the firm, irrespective of level, insofar as this is necessary to implement job responsibilities. There is a precedent for this type of arrangement in the way medical departments operate in many companies.

Having decided that it does in fact wish to take the steps necessary to mount a full-scale attack on performance failure along the lines described, a company must still deal with the problem of who should staff the jobs in the performance analysis group. What kind of educational and experience background is needed? Let us attempt to sketch an ideal portrait, with full realization that few individuals may actually fit this model. On the educational side, considerable training in psychology at the graduate level appears absolutely essential. The crucial courses are those in the industrial, clinical, and social areas, in addition to personality theory, tests and measurements (including projective techniques), and learning theory. Many of the other courses in the traditional graduate program in psychology are not relevant, although a background in research design and statistics is definitely desirable. Some training in sociology and anthropology is also needed. Here the requirements are not as extensive as in psychology, but they are no less important. Industrial sociology, organization theory, the family, criminology, and something in the area of cultural patterns and values appear to be crucial.

Actually, much of the material covered by these courses in psychology and sociology may be included in a program of graduate study in business administration. This depends on the specific school attended and the courses taken. Certain aspects of industrial psychology, social psychology, industrial sociology, and organization theory are particularly likely to be part of professional school training. There are, however, some other subjects which are characteristically taught only in schools of business that need to be included in our required curriculum. Business organization and management, personnel administration, and labor relations should be represented by at least one course each. Ideally there would be more extensive coverage.

It should be understood that the emphasis here is on knowledge rather than course work per se. An experienced teacher, researcher, or practitioner may have acquired considerable information in many of these areas without having participated in formal study. Nevertheless, it seems probable that most of the required knowledge would have to be obtained as part of a program of graduate training, and that this study should have been extensive enough to result in at least a master's degree and probably a doctorate.

Yet this academic training is not of itself likely to be sufficient. The ideal, fully qualified man should have had experience in a staff position with some kind of business organization and have performed creditably in that work. He should also be well informed regarding the company in which he is to work and its people, including such matters as details of organization, specific job requirements, traditions and history, factions, and managerial characteristics. Much of this information will, of course, have to be learned after hiring.

Quite obviously there are very few individuals who fit this pattern. Probably those who come closest are people who have had graduate training in either industrial psychology, industrial sociology, or clinical psychology, but many of these will lack crucial requirements. A large percentage of the industrial psychologists being graduated from the doctoral programs of the major universities have only a slight acquaintance with the techniques of clinical psychology and no background at all in either sociology or labor relations. Industrial sociologists are likely to lack knowledge in many of the areas of psychology, particularly with regard to tests and measurement procedures. They are usually qualified in social psychology, however, and customarily have a good background in the business administration subject areas other than personnel administration. The clinical psychologists will characteristically be lacking in knowledge which is specifically related to the business world. Almost without exception they will lack training in the business administration areas and in much of the sociology, especially that which deals specifically with industry. They may or may not have some exposure to industrial psychology; most will not. Fortunately, there are also a number of interdisciplinary mavericks whose degrees can well be in almost any social science or business area. A few of these people do fit our ideal pattern almost perfectly.

All this means that one will have to search cautiously among prospects, and offer attractive salaries, in order to staff a performance analysis group with competent people. There is, however, another obstacle which has not yet been mentioned, an obstacle of which most companies hiring large numbers of social scientists are well aware. A number of people who have graduate degrees from university social science departments, such as psychology and sociology, and who have not had several years of successful industrial experience, hold strong liberal values. They are really quite opposed to the American business system as it now exists. The job of the performance analyst, like that of the manager, is basically to help employees contribute more effectively to company objectives and thus to increase company profits within the framework of a capitalistic system. The potential for value conflict is obvious. There is a real chance that individuals who hold strong liberal beliefs will become ineffective themselves, with cultural values playing the strategic role. For their own good and that of the company, they should be discouraged from seeking employment in the business world. The probability of failure is far too high. Fortunately, there are many other qualified people who are unlikely to experience difficulties of this kind.

Of course, many firms may, because of their size and other factors, prefer to employ outside consultants in performance analysis rather than establish a permanent group within the company. It is important to keep in mind, however, that a performance analyst does not really begin to pay his way until he has become fully informed regarding the company and has gotten to know a high percentage of those in management. For this reason any consulting relationship should be a relatively permanent one. "Hit and run" service from an outside source may be of some help in the area of diagnosis, but really adequate *solutions* will be few. If the consulting organization cannot provide assurance that the men assigned to the job will spend a sizable amount of their time on the company premises, then it probably should not be engaged. Also, it is just as important that a consultant possess the qualifications previously noted as that a performance analyst on the regular payroll possess them. Unfortunately, among the various firms providing services in the areas of general management and psychological applications, there are only a few which are adequately staffed for this purpose at present.

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See also No. 6.

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